

Watch out for higher priced dishes that are not listed during your trip to Haidian's fast food outlets.

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Accidental discovery uncovers third largest terra-cotta warrior pit in China.

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"I may not recognize your face, but as soon as you show me your feet, they will ring the bell for me."

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## Private Property to be Sacrosanct Under New Law

### First civil code waits for review

By Xiao Rong

Any personal savings and investments as well as profits thus generated are expected to enjoy legal protection equal to state-owned property under new stipulations on property under the nation's first draft civil code.

The civil code was submitted Monday for preliminary reading to the 31st session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress (NPC).

The move marks one of the most significant pieces of legislation to safeguard private property after the 16th National Party Congress announced last month it would "give equal protection to all legal income earned either through work or other ways".

Never before has the legal protection of private property been clearly clarified in China's legal system since 1949. But the private sector was claimed in 1999 to be "an important component of the socialist market economy" in the amendment to the Constitution.

"To improve the legal system on the protection of private property, the newly drafted Property Law focuses on private ownership in a specialized chapter," said Gu Angran, director of the Legal Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee.

Property Law is a crucial part of the civil law system, which deals with a person or legal entity's right to dispose of non-fixed assets and real estate, Gu added.

Under the framework of the law, an individual or private sector

company will have the sole ownership to their possessions and no one will be able to destroy or misappropriate their rights.

Aside from the introduction of the Property Law that fills in a blank of the original civil legislation, the 216-page draft civil code boasts many other breakthroughs.

For the first time, the draft code offers clear provisions on how to protect an individual's privacy. The draft states that anyone, whether an ordinary citizen or someone legally responsible for an organization is entitled to the right of human dignity concerning personal health, name, image, reputation, credit and privacy.

China's renowned civil law expert Wang Liming said the full protection of the right to human dignity may give people a "powerful legal weapon to fight against any kind of illegal violation of their personal rights".

Victims whose civil rights are violated are entitled to seek moral compensation according to the draft.

Aiming to serve as a guideline to civil affairs, the more than 1200 article draft civil code is composed of nine volumes, ranging from general principles to separate laws on property, contracts, human dignity, marriage, adoption, inheritance, etc.

As the newly drafted Property Law is expected to be a milestone in China's legal system, Beijing Today held an exclusive interview with Sun Xianzhong, professor at

the Institute of Law of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

**Beijing Today:** Were there any specific stipulations before in China's law system on the protection of private property? What are the main problems in civil legislation for property protection?

**Sun:** China's law does acknowledge the validity of private property and grant legal protection as well, but there are two major problems. First, the definition of private property is limited to a narrow scope. Only some basic life necessities and implements are regarded as private property.

Second, our law hasn't given enough protection to private property, which has led to the un-

equal status of public and private property. The Constitution clearly stipulates "socialist public property is wholly inviolable". There is no such expression as to the protection of private property.

In case of contradictions between public and private property, public property usually enjoys privileges under the current legal system.

**Beijing Today:** What's the situation like on the protection of private property in civil cases?

**Sun:** With the establishment of China's socialist market economy since early 1990s, there has been a huge increase in personal wealth and the rapid development of the private sector. While civil legislation continues to lag far behind the

need to protect private property, there have been several problems in civil disputes.

Firstly, some private enterprises usually wear a "red hat", which means they seek protection under the umbrella of a state-owned or collective enterprise. Some have ended up with their assets being confiscated or embezzled. I have handled such civil cases before.

Secondly, the tax administrations usually target private enterprises when strengthening supervision on tax dodging. Thirdly, private enterprises have been suffering discrimination in getting bank loans.

**Beijing Today:** What are the reasons for the lack of appropriate protection of private property in both civil legislation and practices?

**Sun:** The main reason lies in the ideology of a planned economy, which holds that private property is a left over from the days of feudalism or capitalism.

Moreover, traditional Confucian ideas encourage individuals to pursue noble spiritual ideals instead of personal wealth. So public property controlled by public power was universal in China. Individuals had little power to manipulate their small amount of private property.

**Beijing Today:** What are the biggest breakthroughs of the newly drafted law?

**Sun:** The most significant change is that we have established basic guidelines to acknowledge and protect all legal property. That is to say, public or private, all legitimate property can enjoy equal protection, which will greatly alleviate the worries of many private entrepreneurs.

There are no expressions like "wholly inviolable" to differentiate public and private property in the draft. Instead, we use concepts like ownership of non-fixed and fixed assets. But the law is still based on the socialist public ownership of China.

**Beijing Today:** How do you

think the new law will benefit the nation and individuals? Will it help to attract more foreign investment?

**Sun:** The formulation of such a law is crucial to economic development and will be a powerful stimulus for wealth creation.

The private sector is the first to benefit from the law, enjoying equal protection for their private investments and profits. Only when their private property is fully protected, will they further increase investment which can create more job opportunities and promote the economy.

As a result, foreign investors will gain more confidence in China's economic environment and be enthusiastic in enlarging their investments.

The law can also promote the reconstruction and upgrade of state-owned enterprises, especially in the field of clarifying property rights and preventing the loss of public property.

With the development of the social economy, civilization can also be pushed forward. Only when people are guaranteed their basic human rights like the property right, can they feel secure and help society to progress.

**Beijing Today:** Will the protection of private property further encourage the gap between the rich and the poor in today's China? Do you think the law needs further improvement?

**Sun:** Any legal individual income under our socialist system should be protected according to the new spirit of the Property Law. But the law is not omnipotent, it's up to the personal income tax law and social security law to alleviate the income gaps between rich and poor.

It may still take two or three years for the law to get final approval by the National People's Congress, but I think the guidelines will be almost set. Further adjustments are still needed, though, especially on the real goal of the law and the basic legal principles behind it.



## Young Lovers Get the Christmas Spirit

Wangfujing sparkles this Christmas Eve. With downtown Beijing decorated with smiling Santa Clauses and "Jingle Bells" resounding in many of the metropolis's shopping malls, the festive season has well and truly arrived in the ancient capital.

Photo by Photocome

## Chinese Football Goes Dutch

By Hou Mingxin

Former Dutch midfielder Arie Haan signed a contract with the Chinese Football Association (CFA) to become the Chinese national team's head coach on December 21.

The 54-year-old said he wanted the team to do well at the 2004 Asian Cup to be held in China.

"I believe we can get a good result at the Asian Cup," said the Dutchman. "I have a lot of confidence to do it, otherwise I wouldn't come to such a big country."

The players would then turn their attentions to qualifying for the 2006 World Cup, added Haan.

Former head coach Bora Milutinovic stepped down after leading China to its first-ever appearance in the World Cup finals earlier this year. The team lost all three of its group games and failed to score a single goal.

Haan said he aimed to replicate the success of compatriot Guus Hiddink, who led South Korea to the semi-finals of this year's World Cup.



Arie Haan at the National team's Xianghe training base December 22

Photo by Weitong

"It's an honor for me to represent this big country with this enormous future," added Haan. "I want to do everything within my mind, my knowledge, my experience to bring football forward here in the country, and it's a real challenge."

Both Haan and the CFA declined to give details of the contract, saying only it was "fair".

It was reported previously that Haan's annual salary de-

mands of around US\$ 700,000 were the most modest among the five candidates for the job, which included Netherlands assistant coach Willem Van Hanagem and former Japanese team's coach Phillippe Troussier.

But according to a report published in Guangzhou-based Soccer News, Haan's salary will be US\$ 450,000 per year.

Chinese State media have reported that although football offi-

cials had qualms over Haan's lack of international coaching experience, they were impressed by his strict training regimes and ideas about cultivating young players.

Haan has already encountered an unforeseen challenge. Reporters repeatedly asked the Dutchman how he preferred to pronounce his surname in Chinese, giving two tonal variations with very different meanings.

"I don't know which one is better, but my name is Arie Haan," he replied.

Arie Haan is the fourth foreign head coach of the Chinese national team, following in the footsteps of German Schlappner, Briton Bobby Houghton, and Yugoslavian Bora Milutinovic.

Haan, born in 1948 in Holland, is a former star of Ajax, one of the most famous clubs in the world. He was part of the famous generation of Dutch players that reached the World Cup finals in 1974 and 1978. His coaching career began in 1987, including stints at top European clubs Anderlecht of Belgium, Stuttgart of Germany and the Netherlands' PSV Eindhoven.



# Home Purchasing Hand in Hand

By Ema Ma

Eighty buyers signed a 50 million yuan estate contract with the developer in a recent house exhibition - the biggest personal estate contract ever in Beijing, considering the number of people and the amount of money involved.

Recently "Group Purchasing" has been one of the most frequently clicked words on the Web in e-business, especially when it comes to the major purchases of homes and automobiles in Chi-

na's major cities such as Beijing and Shanghai.

The temporarily allied house purchasing group is less concerned with cutting prices than with guaranteeing quality.

Since the abolishment of welfare on free housing and relocation due to city planning, purchasing a home has become the most people's most essential, most important expenditure. However, as a rising industry, the real estate market is still not transparent to individual buyers, as contracts

are often expressed in intention-only obscure legal terms.

The frequent non-fulfillment of the contract by the developers is the home buyers' most frequent complaint.

In order to avoid being in the disadvantaged position of a single-handed buyer, purchasers have rallied together to pool their knowledge and information in order to negotiate with the seller.

"Our members mainly come from Zhongguancun, an area densely inhabited with universi-

ties and IT companies. The Internet helped us to get organized," said Mr. Wang, one of the group's representatives.

Bilateral parties reached agreement after seven rounds of negotiations. The final contract included more than 20 additional clauses covering every aspect of the home including quality, environment, property management and other details, to defend the member's interest.

"We will maintain our union to check the quality of the finished

house and outsource the interior decoration," added Mr. Wang.

Although the alliance is only temporary, these future neighbors also plan to keep in close touch after moving into the new dwellings. "Through our united front against the developer, we have formed a comradeship, and we will set up a permanent society to hold parties or other activities in the future. It seems we will return to the intimate community of the courtyard," said one buyer.

## China Approves New Foreign-funded Retail Enterprises

Since 1998, China has been rectifying unlicensed foreign-funded retail enterprises, and the work has nearly been concluded, said Gao Yan, spokeswoman for the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation in Beijing last Friday.

To date, only 28 foreign-funded retail enterprises have been granted licenses from the State Council, while the actual number of such enterprises operating in China exceeds 300.

At a press conference, Gao said that the orderly and active opening-up of the retail industry and the maintenance of order in the commodities market are in the fundamental interests of legitimate foreign-funded retail enterprises.

This past year, China approved 17 enterprises which play positive roles in improving the domestic business environment and market circulation, she said.

China will continue to open its market to foreign-funded enterprises in accordance with its World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments, she said.

(Xinhua)

## Supra-national Treatment Provokes Debate

By Hou Mingxin

At Beijing Forum 2002 - International Distribution Modernization, held on December 11, Zhang Hongwei, Board chairman of Orient Group, complained that foreign enterprises enjoyed "supra-national treatment" in the domestic market.

Zhang took the retail market as an example, saying that despite China's WTO commitments to open its retail market in three years, some foreign-based retail enterprises have already gained access to the domestic market.

"In other words, supra-national treatment," reiterated Zhang.

"China should strictly respect the original timetable, and something should be done to protect the domestic distribution market," added Zhang.

At the same forum, Xu Ming, senior official of the State Economic & Trade Commission (SETC), said most foreign trade enterprises which had penetrated the Chinese market had not been officially approved by the State. Rather, the local government had given them the green light purely for local economic profit. SETC had made great efforts to block such illegal enterprises, said Xu.

Zhang further challenged Xu at the forum, saying SETC still had a lot of work to do in preventing the illegal penetration of foreign enterprises.

Jin Bosheng, senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said, "according to China's WTO commitments, sooner or later, its domestic service industry, including retail and wholesales, will face fierce competition from foreign enterprises. China has been protecting its retail industry for almost twenty years since the 1980s, so the question is: Will domestic enterprises survive without State protection?"

"Although it's a fact that some foreign-based corporations are treated more favorably than domestic ones, it in no way means they benefit from supra-national treatment," said Jin. "Since China has become a member of WTO, its economic policy simply needs some refinement."

According to Lu Qijun, researcher at the Economic Research Consulting Center of SETC, local governments should put the economic profits of the whole nation before their own. He strongly criticized certain local governments' lenience with some foreign-based enterprises.

"I agree with Mr. Zhang Hongwei," said Lu.



December 24, 2002, Judges from Beijing Xicheng Court in new robes. All Judges in China will wear these new robes beginning January 1, 2003.

Photo by Photocom

## Entrepreneurial Brainstorm

By Ema Ma

"China's top 300 entrepreneurs have bared their souls to review the past and look forward to future challenges. Their collective brainstorm will make a profound impact on China's future development," commented critics on the two-day 2002 Conference of Chinese Entrepreneurs held last weekend in Beijing.

### Survival of the fittest

In the case of most formerly state-owned companies, the knottiest problem facing the entrepreneurs today is the ownership of the company. While some players were ousted from the game due to foul play, others are still waiting to see what will happen," observes Li Dongsheng, chairman of TCL. "The survivor must adapt to the new environment without changing it - first, by keeping a low profile, second, by heeding the rules. Not all of our reorganization will be legally supported, but one thing is certain, we will

never breach regulations."

When referring to the challenge of foreign competition after entry into WTO, Mr. Liu Chuanzhi, chairman of Legend Group, quotes a vivid metaphor: "The competition between foreign and local companies is like the race between a rabbit and a turtle. In the first stage, the rabbit is forced to compete with the turtle on the marsh. Obviously, the turtle wins in these favorable conditions. But in the second stage when the competitors are placed on common ground, the turtle must understand the rabbit's essential force in order to outdo it."

Mr. Huang Hui, president of BearingPoint, Greater China, added that "The advantage of cost alone is insufficient to sustain further development in China. Core technology, brand, and management are the ultimate engines for future success. The decline of Asia's Dragons in the financial turmoil has taught us a valuable lesson."

### Entrepreneurs confess

Legal proceedings against some of the former Top Fortune Chinese this year have aroused dispute over money and ethics.

Under the "interrogation" of Zhang Weiying, deputy president of Guanghua Business School, Beijing University, some of the entrepreneurs "confessed" their "original sins":

Liu Yonghao, formerly responsible for having sold agricultural corn feed injected with water, says, "Losing the business of cheated peasants has already made us pay dearly for our short-sighted profit."

Liu Chuanzhi also admitted: "Legend Group was forced to repudiate for two years; we also illegally imported spare parts for a long time."

"Unfair competition against non-state-enterprises must also assume some responsibility for the wrongdoings," considered Liu Chuanzhi. "We must buy official approval in secret to produce, import

and export. About half of our energy is spent on dealing with all kinds of relations with the government."

### "Swindlers' Theory"

Seeing so many entrepreneurs confess the scandals, Mr. Fan Gang, scholar on China's reform, raised another point of view: "Bad debts are caused by a faulty system rather than moral degeneration. State enterprises never intended to repay loans from the state bank.

The institution of the system must be based on the assumption that all people were born dishonest. The formerly state-planned economic system would only have operated smoothly had all participants been sages.

Although the credit crisis plagues the whole world, it is useless to criticize blindly or hesitate to move forward. An open market system improves gradually as we learn from our experience of fraud. Today, China faces the problem of undue regulation in such areas as privatization. But how can we perfect the system if no swindlers put it to the test?"

## Worldwide Bids Invited to Beautify Chimney

New chimney will hopefully become a symbolic building in the city's CBD area

By Shan Jinliang

Will a 240-meter-high factory chimney become the next big thing in Beijing's famous Central Business District (CBD) - that is, once it's been redesigned? The urban architectural dream may come true next year, thanks to a 100,000-yuan design plan.

From December 18, Beijing Co-Generation Branch Company of Guohua Corporation has begun to invite worldwide bids for its landmark chimney, standing on the east section of Chang'an Avenue.

The branch company is a long-time resident of the capital's industrial landscape. As the primary heat source of the city's east district, it was the last to move out of the area. But since the development of CBD in Chaoyang District, its towering chimney has become con-



Photo by Shan Jinliang

spicuously outstanding in the modern business area.

Qualified bids must preserve the function and the chimney's interior structure, and must be able to resist strong Force 11 Gale winds. Easily constructed and conveniently maintained, the new chimney should be both attrac-

tive and significant.

Organizations and individuals are invited to register their names before December 31, 2002 and send their design plans by letter, fax or email to the company before January 29, 2003. First-prize will be awarded 100,000 yuan, two second-prizes will receive 30,000

yuan, and five third-prizes will receive 10,000 yuan.

"We would like the new chimney to define a modern cultural landscape in the east of the capital," said Zhang. "It could even parallel the 245-meter-high China Central Television (CCTV) Tower in western Haidian District, and hopefully, brighten the whole city in time for the 2008 Olympics."

Zhang said the bidding is not only a social responsibility for the company, but also a move to create a more beautiful environment along the Fourth Ring Road, which will serve as the state boulevard for foreign visitors. Located near Sihui Subway Station on the East Fourth Ring Road, the chimney has already been criticized by city leaders for its towering height over the surrounding buildings.

## World Bank Loans to Help China Restructure

The World Bank will provide 1.2 billion to 1.3 billion US dollars in loans to China each year between 2003 and 2005, the Beijing office of the World Bank in China said Friday.

With the loans, the World Bank will help China accomplish two major transitions - from a rural and agricultural society to an urban and industrial society, and from a centrally planned economy to a more globally integrated market-based economy.

The Beijing office said the bank's Board of Executive Directors endorse the overall goal of the World Bank Group's new Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) in supporting China's transition.

The assistance strategy aims to help China improve its business environment and accelerate the transition to a market economy, mostly through an array of knowledge-transfer activities, according to the World Bank.

The bank will also focus on helping China address the needs of poor and disadvantaged people and less developed regions, as well as on setting up an environmentally sustainable development mechanism.

The CAS coincides with major developments in China, including shifting its reforms from the liberalization phase to the more difficult structural and institution-building phase," said World Bank in China director Yukon Huang. (Xinhua)

## More Choices for Passenger Accident Insurance

By Ema Ma

No more the standard 20 yuan for the 20,000-yuan insurance, purchase limits of under ten policies, non-revocable, manually input...All this will change for airline passenger accident insurance - the last regulated life insurance in China.

"The policy can be cancelled or the registration date can be changed in advance, just as in a real insurance contract," stated the draft Rules on Aviation Passenger Accident Insurance, as announced recently on the official website.

The damage crisis caused by the illegible handwritten policy in this year's two serious air crashes calls for the automation of the policy-issuing system. "The new policy will be more detailed, and issued and supervised on the network in real time," the draft Rules announced. "Deliberately over-purchasing to cheat insurance claims can also be prevented through Internet supervision," mentioned one of the insurers.

"Property underwriters are now given permission to operate in the accidental insurance area, originally monopolized by only six life insurance companies," stated the new revised Insurance Law, effective from the beginning of 2003. The opening of this once disputed "superhigh profit" seller's market to these property underwriters will ultimately benefit the customers.

Meanwhile, some nimble forerunners have already taken action on the never-before changed policy: a new kind of 100-yuan insurance card, covering risks on airlines, trains, ships and other transportation, will be issued within one year in some cities for the convenience of frequent passengers. Other companies will also try to extend the insured period for two more hours before and after take-off and landing.

Once the automatic policy-issuing terminal is installed, customers will be able to purchase insurance by clicking on the screen to choose their favorite underwriters listed on the menu. Competition has gone digital.



# Morgan Stanley, Partners, Invest US\$26 Million in Mengniu Dairy

By Shan Jinliang

Morgan Stanley, together with CDH Investment and UK-based CGU-CDC China Capital Partners poured 216 million yuan or US\$26 million into Inner Mongolia-based Mengniu Dairy, the country's fourth largest dairy producer, on December 19. It was the first time for Morgan Stanley to inject funds into China's dairy market. The three investment firms now jointly hold 32 percent of the company's shares.

Experts say the addition of foreign capital and management staff to Mengniu will promote its internationalization strategy and its plan to list on the Hong Kong or an overseas stock exchange next year. The funds will also help the dairy to gain an advantage over the country's top three dairy producers: Beijing-based Sanyuan, Shanghai-based Bright and Inner Mongolia-based Yili.

## Fast growing dairy for a fast growing China

When asked why Morgan Stanley decided to invest in China's dairy market, David Liu, the company's executive director, says, "China is the fastest growing major dairy market in the world. Per capita consumption of dairy products in China is significantly below the global average. Chinese dairy products, especially liquid milk, will continue to see significant growth in the coming years as living standards in China continue to improve." Statistics indicate the overall sales volume of China's dairy market will reach 35 billion yuan this year.

CDH Investment and the UK-based CGU-CDC China Capital Partners share similar views. CDH Executive President Jiao Zhen told *Beijing Today*, "Dairy is one of fastest growing industries in China with an annual growth of over 30 percent, and with a long industry chain, foreign companies cannot compete with domestic producers, which have long dominated the market after battlign with international dairy conglomerates."

On choosing Mengniu over its bigger competitors, Liu says, "Mengniu has an outstanding historical performance and a top-notch management team. The management team also has significant equi-



Niu Gensheng, president of Mengniu Dairy receives an award this October for the fastest-growing unlisted, private company in 1999 to 2001 in China.

Photo by Photocom

ty ownership in the business, which will fully align the interests of management and all other shareholders with the performance of the business." Jiao says the hard-working team and a transparent business model were the two major factors in deciding their investment plan.

Established in July 1999, Mengniu jumped from No. 1,116 to No. 4 in China's dairy market this year with an an-

nual sales volume growth of 1,947.31 percent, making it the fastest growing private company in China in 2002.

## Capital plus management

As a world leading financial investment institution, Morgan Stanley became the biggest shareholder of Mengniu with a US\$18 million investment. "As a long-term investor, in addition to providing capital, we seek to utilize the global

expertise and resources of Morgan Stanley to add value to our investee companies and help them grow," Liu says.

One representative from each foreign investor has joined Mengniu's board of directors and they have established a salary committee and an auditing committee to enable the company to create a sound management pattern.

Jiao says his company hopes to help to internationalize Mengniu in product sales, capital and management, the latter being the first priority. He added Mengniu has made concrete steps in its internationalization strategy in Hong Kong because Mengniu products have become quite popular there after their entry to the market 18 months ago.

## A boost for Mengniu

Liu says the capital will be used mainly for further expansion of the company's production capacity, and Niu Gensheng, president of Mengniu says the foreign stakes will lay a good foundation for its listing next year. Experts say the listing of Mengniu will hit the whole dairy market, in particular the leader Sanyuan from Beijing.

"The foreign investment is very useful for the development of Mengniu as dairy is an industry based on capital," says Zheng Qi, an analyst of the food and beverage industry at China Securities. Since Sanyuan has taken a negative strategy facing challengers Bright and Mengniu, Mengniu will have new opportunities.

Zheng also mentioned that the top three dairy producers are all state-owned enterprises with a less flexible system, but Mengniu is the only private firm, giving it easier access to market listing.

Niu had vowed to be a top three player in the Beijing's dairy market by 2005, and because Beijing is a leading battlefield for China's dairy producers, Mengniu's challenge of Sanyuan could be a decisive step. Now with a factory in the city's urban Touzhou District, Mengniu will take a closer step to becoming one of the top three dairy producers in China when it moves its sales, research and development centers to Beijing next June.

# Medicine Retail Rookie Eyes Bigger Market

By Xiao Rong

Beijing's first discount drug-store announced its ambition Monday to lead the medicine retail market by following the example of the domestic home appliances industry.

Develche Drugstore Co., Ltd. says it will spend 200 million yuan in 2003 to monopolize the exclusive purchasing and selling rights of certain kinds of medicines from 14 famous domestic pharmaceutical manufacturers.

"By launching the wholesale purchasing model, our goal is to reduce costs and guarantee medicine quality so that Develche can be more competitive in the medicine retail area,"

said Develche Manager Zhang Yukuan at the contract-signing ceremony with the 14 manufacturers on Monday.

Zhang said that Develche hopes to become the Gome of the medicine retail industry. One of the leading domestic home appliances retailers, Beijing-based Gome, announced several months ago it would spend 3 billion yuan to purchase the exclusive rights to several types of high-class color TV sets.

Since opening its first drug-store in northeast Beijing in March, featuring prices 25 percent lower than those of average drugstores, Develche has now expanded to five branches with

a monthly sales volume reaching almost 10 million yuan.

In the opinion of Feng Gui, marketing manager of Tianjin Sino-America Tianjin Smith-kline& French Laboratory Ltd. (one of Develche's partners), cooperation between pharmaceutical manufacturers and medicine retailers will help manufacturers strengthen management over sales channels and enable consumers to buy cheaper medicines.

"Develche doesn't want to squeeze the reasonable profit margins of manufacturers, but wants to continue lowering unnecessary circulation costs, like rebates, which have lead to the

widespread overpricing of medicine," said Zhang Yukuan.

"We totally support the strategic partnership between domestic medicine retailers and manufacturers, which will benefit consumers by both guaranteeing the quality of medicines and lowering prices," said Zhu Changhao, vice director of the China Medicine Business Association.

But Zhu said Develche's aim to monopolize the exclusive purchasing and selling rights of some medicines is just a form of commercial promotion.

"It's impossible for Develche, a newcomer to Beijing's huge medicine retail market with

its current five branches, to monopolize the sale of certain medicines. Manufacturers will not promise to do so either. So it's more like a mutual strategic partnership between the two sides," Zhu said.

He urged domestic medicine retailers to avoid price wars and to seek healthy development by improving service levels and adjusting their medicine structures.

"The medicine retail industry only accounts for 15 percent of the total domestic medicine market share. Lowering prices by undercutting other stores will only hurt the long-term competitiveness of the whole industry," stressed Zhu.

# Geely Revs Up Deals with Foreign Automakers

By Sun Zhenjie / Shan Jinliang

Chinese private carmaker Geely Automobile Co. signed a contract with South Korean Daewoo International Corp. in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, on Monday evening that will allow the two sides to develop cars for the Chinese market.

It was the second big deal for Geely this month following its cooperation agreement last week with Italian Auto Projects Group to manufacture Chinese market-oriented auto "Mobile Castle." Li Shufu, chairman of Geely Group said the Italian company designs the manufacturing of the world-leading Ferrari Racing Car and develops popular cars for Benz and other renowned automakers. The company's plate design technology was listed as No. 2 in Europe, and it cost Geely US\$40 million to buy the brand-new car model and the technology from the group.



Li Shufu (right), chairman of Geely Group, signs a contract to jointly develop cars for the Chinese market with Lee Tae-Yong, president of Daewoo International Corporation on Monday.

Photo by Sun Zhenjie

Geely's two agreements are considered as a struggle to remain competitive in the increasingly fierce market competition.

The contract between Geely and Daewoo International will

help Geely establish a car assembly plant in the form of a consortium with three other domestic companies. According to the contract, Top Metal Works Co. will provide casts for the interior and exterior car metal,

Wooshin Systems Co. will provide automatic assembly lines for car bodies and CES Co. will provide programs for Simultaneous Engineering (SE). Together with Daewoo International, the overall value of the contracts is estimated at over \$30 million.

Local media report the companies are well suited to cater to the needs of Geely as Top Metal Works and Wooshin Systems' main businesses are the automaker's shortcomings.

Xu Gang, president of Geely Group, said he was satisfied with the cooperation with the South Korean side and the Italian side. "Geely will take the opportunity of international cooperation to realize exceeding development," Xu said.

The deals follow the company's "Horse Plan," which was announced a few months ago. Under the plan Geely expects to produce 300,000 cars and

300,000 engines by 2005, and reach a production and sales figure of 100,000 — double the figure of this year.

Xu said the company is introducing technologies suitable for the Chinese market, not just cutting edge fads, that enable the company to produce cars affordable for ordinary consumers. According to Geely, "affordable cars" refer to five-seat, 50,000-yuan cars that consume 5 liters every 100 kilometers.

With an investment of over US\$70 million, Xu said Geely was eager to list on the financial markets, but financial pressures have slowed the company's development. The company is now negotiating with another carmaker on a possible joint venture.

Xu said he couldn't release the name of the company's new partner until the contract is signed, but hinted that the company was one of the world's top 10 carmakers.

# First Car Rental JV Debuts in Shanghai

By Hou Mingxin

On December 28, China's first car rental joint venture was established in Shanghai.

The new company, Anji Car Rental & Leasing Co Ltd, is jointly owned by Shanghai Automotive Industry Sales Corp (SAISC) and Avis Europe Plc, a division of US-based car rental giant Avis.

According to a SAISC spokesman, a total of US\$66 million will be pumped into the new venture, which has registered a capital of US\$22 million. Each partner will hold a 50 percent stake.

Shanghai Anji Car Rental Co, a SAISC subsidiary, will provide the new company with 1,000 cars. Avis will provide management expertise, technologies and partnership resources for the new firm. The new company will operate its business under the brand of "Avis."

"The new joint venture indicates that the domestic car rental market has become more closely connected with the global market," says the spokesman.

Industry observers say the joint venture shows that China has begun opening up its domestic auto service sector to foreign companies following the country's entry to the World Trade Organization last year.

Avis is not the first foreign player to enter the domestic car rental market.

The world's leading car rental firm, Hertz, owned by US auto giant Ford Motors, launched its wholly-owned operations in China last January after signing a licensing agreement with China National Automotive Anhua (Tianjin) International Trade Co Ltd. The US-based company now operates 10 outlets in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

# GM Sets Up New Plant in East China

US automaker General Motors signed an agreement last Friday to transfer part of its China operations from Shanghai to Yantai, a coastal city in East China's Shandong Province.

The agreement was signed by Shanghai Automobile Industrial (Group) Corporation, General Motors China and Shanghai GM Company Ltd., which hold 25 percent, 25 percent and 50 percent of the shares of a new joint venture.

Shanghai GM will relocate its Sail car production line to the new plant in Yantai, which will be Shanghai GM's second automobile manufacturing site outside Shanghai.

The relocation was completed on December 10, and the new plant is designed to have an annual production capacity of 100,000 Sail cars.

(Xinhua)



The first Beijing editions of Sonata cars roll off the production line in Shunyi District, Beijing, on Monday. The cars are manufactured by a joint venture between Beijing Automotive Industry Holdings Co. and South Korea's Hyundai. Six hundred consumers drove the first Sonata cars home on Tuesday, and over 2,000 orders have been placed by city residents.

Photo by Mily



# Greenspan Sees No Risk of Deflation

## Denies China is the cause

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said last week there was no reason to fear the United States was at risk of price deflation and said recent evidence showed the economy was working past a soft patch.

The Fed chief was cautiously upbeat about the economy's prospects, especially since the US central bank cut interest rates by a half percentage point on November 6, bringing its federal funds rate to a four-decade low of 1.25 percent.

Greenspan made his remarks at the Economic Club of New York, December 19.

In response to questions, Greenspan said concerns that China's growing volume of low cost exports was effectively exporting deflation by keeping global prices down was unlikely.

Much of China's wealth goes simply to feeding its people, he noted.

"The argument that you often hear that the Chinese are exporting deflation to the rest of the world is frankly a rather large exaggeration," he said.

(Edmund L. Andrews)



Richard Grasso, left, chairman and CEO of the New York Stock Exchange, and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan at the Economic Club of New York Thursday, December 19, 2002  
AP Photo

### Analysts' Take:

#### Bu Deying, Economic Analysis Dept., State Information Center

We can identify 10 factors causing global deflation.

1. Technological progress, particularly improvements in the IT sector forced prices down while quality was improved. This will continue in the foreseeable future.

2. Multinational companies sell their goods/technologies and produce products worldwide. This increased profits and

reduced their fixed assets investment, leading to lowered production costs and increased the competition on the global market. Hence goods are cheaper worldwide.

3. The post-industrial era reduced our dependence on concrete natural resources, increased the cost of high quality labor while keeping the labor costs of the majority stable and low.

4. The increasing income gap between the world's rich and poor has led to insufficient demand.

5. The world's stock markets absorbed a large quantity of

capital that disappeared after the stock market bubble burst, thus prevents capital flowing into industrial production and arresting demand increase in these industries.

6. Developed countries are used to curbing inflation and hesitate politically to curb deflation.

7. The financial crises in a number of countries since the mid 1990s depressed their consumption demand and increased their exports to the world market due to their devalued currencies and US' insistence on a strong dollar. Their cheap exports supported the low-inflation economic prosperity in US in the 1990s, but also sewed the seeds of deflation.

8. The introduction of E-commerce provides more options to enterprise purchasers, forcing suppliers to further lower the prices of their products.

9. The high-tech bubbles in the 1990's, such as the telecommunications boom, absorbed and wasted billions of dollars of investment, reduced available capital and led to an overall insufficient demand in other sectors.

10. Globalization and the new WTO rules force state governments to be more cautious in their policy-making, including

combating deflation.

In all, the world is now entering a phase of deflation and won't come out of this stage in the foreseeable future.

### Media Reports:

China is a victim of global deflation.

China is favored by investors from the developed countries for its huge and competitive labor force, which led to the continued inflow of industrial investment to the country. But China has never been a "factory of the world", because these investors came to China aiming at exploiting the local market, where the population's purchasing power is growing.

China has never been and can never become the source of the global deflation, because China can't set the prices for its exports in the overseas markets. China can set the FOB (free on board) prices for its exports, to the largest extent. Importers, wholesalers and retailers set the final prices.

Therefore, China's low-priced exports are the result of global deflation, not the source.

-Economic Outlook (monthly), Bank of China (Hong Kong)

# Soros Convicted of Insider Trading

Local expert said China's financial market is weak but improving

PARIS (AP) - American billionaire financier and philanthropist George Soros was convicted of insider trading last week and fined \$2.2 million by a French court. Soros said he was "astounded and dismayed" and vowed to appeal.

The 72-year-old Soros denied having inside information about a pending takeover attempt of French bank Societe Generale when he traded its shares 14 years ago.

The court judgment said Soros had inside knowledge of the takeover bid because the financiers behind it asked him to participate. Soros declined, but then bought 160,000 bank shares for his Quantum Fund and gained \$2.28 million from their sale in 1988, the court said.

Societe Generale was privatized in 1987. A year later, its stock price rose during an unsuccessful takeover bid.

French regulators first noticed anomalies in the stock surge in 1989. Soros was put under judicial investigation - one step short of being charged - in 1993.

Soros is president and chairman of Soros Fund Management LLC, the primary adviser to the Quantum Group of Funds.

Quantum evolved from a fund Soros created in 1973 with about \$12 million. Today, Quantum manages funds worth about \$7 billion, said Vachon, the financier's spokesman.

(John Leicester)

### Analysts' Take:

Zhao Xijun, deputy director, Finance and Securities Institute, Renmin University

Speculators can take advantage of China's opening financial market in four zones.

First, China's legal system is based on that adopted in Continental Europe, which clearly indicates what behavior constitutes breaking the law. This leaves many gray areas for speculators to play in the market, as long as they do not break the points clearly defined in the laws and regulations.

Second, China's market rules are very weak. This is particu-

larly serious in local financial markets. This means we have no self-regulated consciousness or discipline.

Third, China's financial entities, such as banks, insurance companies and securities institutions, are owned or majority controlled by the state. The lax system means that managers are often not responsible enough to make the best deal, and corruption can be rife.

Fourth, China's legal system has no effective ways to apprehend and punish financial criminals like Soros.

But China has built up a preliminary legal system aiming at protecting fair performance in the markets. The government is becoming more sophisticated in managing the financial industry.

Banking, securities and insurance are under separate government management. Each industry is looking for ways to perfect its self-regulating practices. The QFII (qualified foreign institutional investors) mechanism introduced recently for overseas investors to participate in the country's stock market is a good example.

China has established independent prosecution and enforcement institutions, which are targeted at supervising and detecting unfair and law-breaking behavior.

Media are encouraged to supervise and detect criminals in the financial industry, which has been successful in the last few years.

The Chinese Communist Party's Central Discipline Inspection Commission, established in the early 1980s to monitor economic criminals within the party, has proved its effectiveness.

Financial institutions are improving and perfecting their internal monitoring and management in their contacts and cooperation with overseas counterparts.

To sum up, it is a long-term process to build up a sophisticated financial market. Education in risk consciousness and management is an urgent need in China where for decades life was arranged by the central government from the cradle to the grave.



## Don't Cry, Argentina

Argentina prides itself as being one of the world's great food baskets, but rising food prices and unemployment caused by the protracted slump have spread hunger across a country famous for fork-tender beef and unending fields of grain.

In almost five years of reces-

sion, with a rate of 21.5 percent unemployment and a collapse in social aid, Argentina's economic crisis has left half of the country's 36 million people living below the poverty line and malnourished children dying around the nation.

The IMF agreed prior to

Christmas Day to consider a "transitional" lending program for Argentina that would provide the debt-strapped nation with enough money to repay existing loans - but delay new financing until after next year's presidential election.

Xinhua/AFP Photo

# Conseco Files in 3rd-Largest Bankruptcy



Conseco's headquarters in Carmel, Indianapolis  
Reuters Photo

INDIANAPOLIS, USA (AP) - Insurance and finance company Conseco Inc., deep in debt and facing a federal investigation of its accounting practices, filed for Chapter 11 protection in the third-largest bankruptcy in US history.

The company filed last week after reaching tentative agreements with two of the three groups of investors owed a total of \$6.5 billion from 1990s acquisitions that soured, including a \$6 billion purchase that left Conseco with the nation's largest portfolio of mobile-home loans.

St. Paul, the Minnesota-based Conseco Finance Corp., which over-

sees that portfolio and other consumer finance products, would be sold under the agreement.

The filing does not include Conseco's insurance operations, which the company and insurance regulators say remain financially sound.

Conseco reached agreements in principal with bondholders owed \$2.5 billion in public debt and banks that are due \$1.5 billion. Holders of preferred securities, who maintain privileges over holders of common stock in recovering their investments, did not reach a deal and talks will continue, Conseco spokesman Mark Lubbers said.

### Retailers Face Worst in 30 Years

CHICAGO, Dec 24 (Reuters) - U.S. retailers, reeling from a lackluster holiday season that is forecast to be the weakest in more than 30 years, may ring in the New Year with steep mark-downs on clothing, accessories - and profit forecasts.

Goldman Sachs analyst George Strachan cut his earnings estimates on top retailers including Wal-Mart and Federated Department Stores Inc.

"What's going to be crucial now is the week after Christmas," said NRF spokesman Scott Krugman. "We're going to have a week of gift certificate redemptions, we're going to have some returns and exchanges and new purchases as retailers are busy clearing out merchandise. We just might squeak by with this 4 percent estimate after all."

"The bottom line is, the (holiday sales) performance is likely to be the weakest on record," said Michael Niemira, retail analyst with Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi.

(Emily Kaiser)

### Gold's Rally May Extend Next Year

New York, Dec. 25 (Bloomberg) - Gold, on track for its biggest annual gain in 23 years, may rise further in the new year as the threat of a US-led attack against Iraq prompts buying of the metal as a haven, analysts and traders said.

Gold futures have soared 24 percent this year, reaching a 5 1/2-year high close to \$350 an ounce, as tumbling stocks and a weakening dollar sent investors looking for alternative assets. Prices may rise as much as another \$50, even before any attack, some traders said.

"We might go to \$380 or \$400, but it's going to have a hard time getting over that," said Leonard Kaplan, president of Prospector Asset Management, a money-management company in Evanston, Illinois.

(Claudia Carpenter)

### Saudi Arabia Bans Investment Firms

JEDDAH, Dec. 26 (Arab News) - Saudi Arabia has banned two-dozen investment companies operating without license in the country and offering highly exaggerated interest rates, bankers have said.

SAMA, the Kingdom's central bank, also ordered local commercial banks to freeze the accounts of the companies and barred any withdrawal or transfer of money from them.

Banking sources estimated that the companies had managed to collect more than SR7 billion (Saudi rials) from around 50,000 clients. The operations, which began several years ago, gained momentum thanks to the religious cover under which these companies operated. Many investors withdrew their money from commercial banks to invest in these companies.

The companies had investments to the tune of SR4.6 billion (\$1.2 billion). They were active in high-risk speculation in real estate and had paid interest rates ranging from 15 to 70 percent.

(Waleed Bouali)

### Japan to Deregulate Gas Market

TOKYO, Dec. 25 (Dow Jones Newswires)- Japan plans to deregulate its retail natural gas market further by opening to competition 44% of total demand in the fiscal year beginning April 2004, and more than 50% of demand in the fiscal year starting April 2007.

Demand from those users - such as small factories and hotels - accounts for 44% of total demand, nearly 500,000 cubic meters a year, a Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) official said.

To spur competition and help lower the country's relatively high gas rates, Japan has gradually opened up the retail natural gas market since 1995.

Under a regulation plan implemented in November 1999, non-gas utilities are allowed to sell retail gas to large-lot industrial users of more than 1 million cubic meters a year -which accounts for about 37% of total demand.

(Maki Aoto)

(Mark Jewell)





Disabled toilet near Chaoyang Gymnasium

Photo by Wang Wei

# Room for Beauty

By Chen Ying

Local governments are now going beyond the call of duty in providing for the call of nature.

Last week, Chaoyang District inaugurated 50 sparkling new public toilets throughout the east neighborhood, each including its own separate “dressing space” for female users to powder their noses.

The new bathrooms, almost exclu-

sively located on the main avenues of Chaoyang, are all air-conditioned and equipped with the latest technology in automatically-controlled, water-saving devices. Some are even installed with varying degrees of audio-visual entertainment. And all of them are free.

But for women, their most exciting feature is still the private little space reserved for freshening up in front of the mirror. “I was surprised

to find a real dressing table in this tiny public bathroom. But I love it,” confessed a young woman who preferred to remain anonymous at a public toilet near Chaoyang Gymnasium this Wednesday.

Five of these bathrooms contain environmental protection toilets, which use a waterless mechanism for purging waste, and two cleaners are regularly assigned to clean each bathroom.

## Crouching Bird Hidden Phoenix

By Sun Ming

Which is stronger, the Bird or the Phoenix? On December 17, Beijing's Second Intermediate Court finally ruled the famous nine-head-bird restaurant Jiutouniao (九头鸟) the winner of an improper competition lawsuit against its wannabe rival nine-head-phoenix Jiutoufeng (九头凤).

Following a first failure, the final judgment ordered Jiutoufeng to immediately cease using its current name, restaurant sign, branded curtains and business card, all bearing a strong resemblance to Jiutouniao's. Only Jiutouniao's request for a 500,000-yuan compensation fee was refused, because the restaurant was unable to provide sufficient evidence proving its economic loss.

Shi Songjun, present owner of Jiutoufeng, is the former head chef of Jiutouniao. He resigned in January this year before opening his own restaurant in Chaoyang district on February 2.

Like Jiutouniao, Jiutoufeng also serves typical Hubei dishes. Jiutoufeng's logo, slogan, appearance, decoration, menu, coupon design, business card and gift certificate all take after Jiutouniao's distinctive trademark design.

The names Jiutoufeng and Jiutouniao differ by only one Chinese character. But while Jiutouniao, literally nine-head-bird, is a bird of legend in Hubei province, Jiutoufeng, literally nine-head-phoenix, is a purely made-up word.

Jiutouniao brought the first lawsuit against Jiutoufeng in April. But it lost the trial in June. *Beijing Times* reckons the reason was that Jiutouniao just wasn't famous enough.

Jiutouniao then appealed to the higher Second Intermediate Court, citing China's improper competition law, making it illegal to use a similar name, look, decoration or packaging to that of a famous commercial product or enterprise, which may deceive consumers.

Jiutouniao, which opened in 1997, is a chain restaurant that now has five branches in Beijing. According to the court, it is obvious that Jiutoufeng's intention was to take advantage of Jiutouniao's established reputation to develop its own business.

“Jiutoufeng's action definitely counts as improper competition,” affirms Guo Wei, lawyer of Tianyuan Law Firm, to *Beijing Today*. “The new version of the trademark law issued at the end of last year particularly emphasizes the protection of famous brands.”

## Once an Alcoholic, Now a Thief

By Sun Ming

Some people will do anything to kick the habit. One alcoholic believed imprisonment was the best method for him. But first he had to become a thief.

“I'm serious. I believe that I can control myself in prison,” declared 37-year-old Cui Hong, divorced and jobless, to the judges of Fengtai District People's Court. “So I stole in order to be arrested.”

Cui Hong had tried to quit drinking many times before, but always unsuccessfully.

From May to August of this year, Cui stole on three occasions in west Beijing. His final loot amounted to 45 aluminum alloy window frames, which he sold for a total sum of 2,394 yuan. Then he spent all the money eating in restaurants.

This September, Fengtai Police received an anonymous phone call. The informer said he could name the thief of several aluminum alloy window frames in Fengtai District during the past three months. He also provided the thief's address. The thief's name was the same as the informer's. The thief's address was Cui Hong's.

Finally last week, Cui was fined 2,000 yuan and sentenced to 10 sobering months in prison.



Photo by Bai Jikai

## Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow!

By Sun Ming

Beijing has just experienced its longest snowfall in history.

From last Thursday to this Tuesday, the six-day snowfall broke the city's previous four-day snowfall record in December 1989.

Cleansed by the snow, the sky is so clear these days that people in downtown Beijing can see right through to the snowy scenes of the suburbs.

From this photograph taken from a high-rise on Chang'an Avenue, west suburban Western Hills seems

to neighbor the Forbidden City, although in reality they are separated by 20 kilometers.

According to Xu Changqing, expert from the Beijing Observatory, city temperatures will start to warm up beginning tomorrow.

## No Smash Photography Allowed

By Sun Ming

Give me suicide. Flash. Give me a front-page story. Smash.

Five suspects accused of smashing a reporter's digital camera to prevent his coverage of a suicide attempt in a residential complex were arrested Tuesday in Chaoyang District.

Saturday, *Beijing Times* reporter Zhang Rundong had followed a lead about a young woman threatening to jump from her 5th floor apartment in Hua Sheng Yue Zhang (华盛乐章) residential complex, Chaoyang district.

Zhang rushed to the scene, but he was stopped at the entrance by a middle-aged man wearing the badge of the complex's managing department.

“I showed him my press ID, but he just pushed me outside very rudely,” Zhang told *Beijing Today*. “He said, ‘Non-residents are prohibited.’” A *Beijing Youth Daily* reporter was also pushed out.

Zhang tried to take photographs from outside, but four more people came to interfere. “I told them that I had the right to cover the news, but it was no use. They yelled at me and grabbed my camera.”

One middle-aged woman took Zhang's digital camera and dropped it on the ground. A passerby tried to help Zhang pick up the camera, but the woman grabbed it and dropped it again.

“When they couldn't find any film inside the digital camera, they resorted to smashing it,” said Zhang.

Accompanied by a Yayuncun policeman named Liu Jie, Zhang returned to the managing department the next day to identify the five people who had destroyed his camera.

Zhang Zhi, manager of the department, asked five of his staff members to come out, but none of them were the guilty vandals. Zhang Zhi refused to call all of his staff members out.

Three days later, local policemen arrested the five suspected criminals inside the complex, but they all denied committing any act of vandalism. “The camera just fell out of my hand by accident,” Liu Suyun said to the police. “We just wanted him to get out.”

The case is still under investigation.



Zhang's smashed camera

Photo by Zhang Rundong



Photo by Cao Boyuan

## Birds of a Feather Flock to Beihai

By Sun Ming

Beihai Park (北海公园) has pumped its lake back into shape this winter by stirring the water with a mechanical pump which prevents it from freezing. In the past, the birds of the lake usually migrated to other places to find water once the surface was frozen.

But this year, forty ducks and two geese, now permanent residents of the park's 390,000-square-meter lake thanks to its flowing accommodation, have gathered around its 100 square meters of stirring water to celebrate Christmas.

“At the very beginning, the ducks didn't get along, but later, when they realized there was enough food to go around in the flowing water, they all decided to settle down, and so far not one of them has taken off,” observed Wang Ying, administrative staff member of the park. “Even just last week, some new sheldrakes flew in to join the flock.”

## Indoor Ice Storm



By Lily Li / Li Jing

The “Silver Dream-Happy World of Ice and Snow” Festival sponsored by Ditan Park will open its curtain on New Year's Day.

It will be the largest Ice and Snow Festival in Beijing with almost 300 pieces of frozen floats and sculptures.

Due to weather conditions, it is very difficult to hold such ice and snow activities in Beijing. This festival marks the beginning of indoor snow recreation in the Chinese capital.

The festival is open daily from 9am to 10:30pm.

Photo provided by Li Jing

## Now Boarding, Flight UA to Bankruptcy

By Sun Ming

Two Chinese passengers brought a lawsuit against United Airlines (UA), still in bankruptcy crisis, this Monday in Beijing.

Tan Jinsong, 40, manager of Beijing Heng Sheng Science & Technology Ltd., and his 10-year-old son Tan Cheng, demanded a public apology from United Airlines, as well as 153,750 yuan in compensation.

Tan and his son had intended to take a UA flight from Beijing to Tokyo on September 1, but they were refused boarding at the last minute.

“We were stopped by United Airlines staff members at the boarding gate for no reason,” said Tan in his petition to Beijing Chaoyang District People's Court. Tan and his son's final destination was Portland, U.S., and their UA flight to Tokyo was only the first leg of their journey.

Tan and his son ended up taking a flight on another airline, but they failed to arrive in the U.S. according to schedule. “I missed a crucial meeting to sign a contract with an American company, so my company lost a key business opportunity,” said Tan. “My company fined me 100,000 yuan as a result.”

Yu Dongyun, United Airlines spokeswoman in Beijing, told *Beijing Today* that “Tan's story is quite different from what our staff members experienced at the airport. Tan and his son were refused boarding because they arrived at the boarding gate too late.”

According to United Airlines, Tan had asked for two seats close together for himself and his son at 8:40 am that day. Even after he was told this was not possible, he persisted in his demand. Only after more lengthy but unsuccessful insistence did Tan finally give in. But when he and his son rushed to the boarding gate at 9:43, the walkway between the gate and the airplane had already been moved away two minutes earlier, at 9:41.

“That's why we didn't allow them to board,” Yu told *Beijing Today*. “We believe the court will give us a fair judgment.”

Li Jiang, lawyer of Beijing Zhongzhao Law Firm, affirms that the trial of this case is not influenced by the present bankruptcy crisis of the world's No.2 airline. “If UA loses, it will still be required to pay the compensation with its remaining assets.”

## From Hubei with Love

By Su Wei / Xu Hu / Tian Jian

After wooing 128 women nationwide and making over 50,000 yuan in just 3 months, one 19-year-old young man from Hubei was finally condemned by a Xicheng Procurator on December 18.

The 128 women, ranging in age from 20 to 40 years old, were only the fortunate few who managed to stick in the mind of the convicted Li Jianqing - and who admitted to being among his victims, according to Beijing Public Security Bureau's Xicheng branch.

27-year-old Li Hua (pseudonym), a woman from Shanxi, recalled receiving a letter from Armymen Love Center (Junmin Qingyuan) in early August, offering her a lifelong mate for the one-time low price of 400 yuan, complete with a 350-yuan refund if the match ended successfully in marriage.

“It included a photo of a handsome Major in his thirties named Wang Kaihua, supposedly serving in the People's Liberation Army, plus a handwritten letter signed by Wang himself. He expressed how deep his love and devotion for me would be, but he regretted not being able to communicate with me directly, due to the Army's strict discipline. He said I could trust the Center to keep our relationship alive.”

But soon after she rushed off to send the requested 400 yuan to a designated post office box in Beijing, her heart began to sink. Wang's devoted love letter was the last she heard from both the Center and the charming major himself.

Quick to recover from her humiliating heartbreak, Li reported the scam to the police. One month later, Li Jianqing was caught red-handed fetching his latest profits at Xizhimen Post Office.

After interrogation, Li surrendered a full confession. “I found the photo somewhere, named the guy Wang Kaihua, and handwrote his letter myself. The Center does not exist. I made it all up in words. All the letters say the same thing, and all are written by me.”



# Trust Me, I'm a Doctor

## Hospital patients demand rights to privacy

By Lily Li

China's healthcare system is becoming more transparent than some patients would like. A visit to the doctor can be traumatic enough without the added worry of strangers overhearing details of your illness, let alone being privy to an intimate examination.

Of course, you know that when you visit the hospital, you will have to confess private or possibly embarrassing details about your health, but these days it seems patients' secrets are not so secret anymore.

According to a report in *Beijing Evening News* on December 18, 30-year-old Han Su (pseudonym) suffered what she felt was a violation of her privacy when she went to a hospital for treatment in Hefei, Anhui Province.

As Han said, after a regular examination, a female doctor asked a male intern to make another diagnosis. "He put one hand on my bladder and the other hand touched my vagina," she said, "at that time I was quite nervous about my illness and unaware what he was doing. It was all too late when I realized what had happened. I was almost embarrassed to death.

Han sued the hospital. "How can the hospital violate the privacy of my body which is an inherent right? I came to the hospital to get treatment, how can they use me as a live teaching aid?" said she.

But the hospital said that they had not done wrong, because according to hospital rules, a female doctor or nurse must be present when a male doctor examines a female patient. "We obeyed the rules since the female doctor didn't leave." They also stated that hospitals are responsible for giving medical students practical experience. If every patient refused, there will be no doctors in the future.

However, You Zhilong, an experienced lawyer disagreed, saying the behavior of

the hospital violated the patient's dignity and right to privacy. "Certain parts of the body should not be looked at, or worse filmed or photographed, even by family members, to say nothing of students," he said.

Other cases have been reported. A previous incident occurred on September 15, 2000 at Xinjiang Shihezi University No.1 hospital. Patient Liu Ting, undergoing an abortion, was appalled when her doctor brought in 20 male and female medical students and began pointing out parts of her body after she had removed her trousers. The students continued to observe the highly sensitive operation. Shocked by the circumstances of her treatment, Liu said the environment was horrifying. She had to further endure the laughter of students during the procedure.

She asked the hospital to apologize publicly and pay damages for psychological trauma. But the hospital turned her down and said firmly they won't warn patients in advance of the attendance of students, as patients are sure to refuse permission. The case is now on trial.

Patients being used as "live textbooks" is just a small percentage of complaints from patients about hospitals violating their rights to privacy. According to them, they are dissatisfied with medical records hanging on their sickbeds from which everyone can see the details of their illness, and crowded clinics full of nosy people. Patients at Beijing University No. 3 hospital have suggested that there should be some sort of waiting system, similar to that in banks, so that everyone is forced to wait his turn.

"Only when the patients are viewed as people instead of samples for testing can their rights of privacy be well respected," said Cong Yali, a doctor in bioethics at Beijing University.

After the new Rules for Dealing With Medical Accidents came in this Septem-

ber, patients' rights to privacy are in the spotlight. Can patients have rights to privacy and good treatment from hospitals at the same time? How should the hospital defend patients' privacy? Should students be allowed to practice on patients? Opinions follow:

**Xie Xin, intern, Beijing No. 6 Hospital**

Doctors and even we interns have a clear understanding of patients' bodies before an operation, and we don't just cure one or two patients, so it's untenable to say we 'pry into patients' private body parts'. We care most about the effects of the operation and the diagnosis itself, not what patients' bodies look like.

It's quite common for us to follow senior doctors when they operate because the operating theater is the only clinical practicing base for us. Only when we can diagnose patients by ourselves can we grasp the techniques of medicine. It's a process we need to obtain experience.

If patients emphasize their rights, we will have a lot of trouble gaining practical experience. We will only be able to learn in theory, not in practice.

But undoubtedly, respecting patients is the basic rule of being a good doctor. We often associate with the patients and sometimes we even have to pay fees for our lessons in the hospital. I don't think it's a big problem, most patients will understand because maybe in the future we will be helping them and their family.

**Wu Qian, patient in The Third Hospital of Beijing University**

I feel so bad going to the hospital for treatment because there the doctors never treat patients alone. Many people wait just outside the examination room, close enough for them to hear every word of the conversation between the doctor and me. Even if there is a note saying 'Please Wait Outside',

many patients still rush into the room and stand beside you.

As we know, it's natural for doctors to ask some private questions during the process of diagnosis, but how can you help feeling embarrassed and uneasy when others are listening?

I would like to preserve my rights to privacy, but with the attitude to service at the hospital, you don't have any rights at all! When anyone can overhear the test results, I have to throw my dignity away.

The hospital should have no difficulties in supervising these processes to make the patients feel they are being respected, for example, putting the medical records, test results and X-ray photos in closed boxes and fixing dark window panes or curtains in the room. These details can give patients confidence and help them relieve the pressure. It's easy to help both sides.

**Tu Chuanhui, lawyer, Yangzhongyang Law Firm**

It takes a great deal of courage for women to show others their private parts. Doctors should treat these parts as they would any other part of the body. If they don't, it's sure to hurt the patients and violate their rights to privacy.

I believe not many women would like to be used as models for teaching, or to permit the students to study and do research, unless the hospital can pay a considerable fee to them.

I admit it's necessary for students to get direct experience from patients, but doctors should explain clearly to patients in advance and get their approval. Above all, discussions should not take place in front of patients. This shows doctors have no regard for patients' feelings, and communication between doctors and patients is the key.

As far as I'm concerned, I won't have medical students operate on me, because I don't know who would bear

the responsibility and compensate me for my loss if the operation fails. And how can they compensate for that? I won't take such risks.

According to hospital rules, doctors should 'respect, take good care of and protect patients' privacies', and 'one doctor for one patient' is the key guarantee from the hospital to the patients. I think it's the hospitals and doctors' responsibilities to defend patients' right to privacy.

**Lilian Pociveal, nursery maid from Peru**

I have just had an operation in Beijing Xuanwu Hospital, and I dare to say the hospital is where foreigners get most discrimination from local people in China. Everybody was looking at me and talking about me. And even during the operation, the doctors laughed and whispered.

Of course I'm angry because I'm just a patient and I pay all the fees for their service, how can they treat me like that? I wonder why the hospitals can't offer service with a smile. People need that most.

Patients walk into the hospital, meaning they hand their hopes to doctors. And the most important promises from the hospital are service and respect.

I can imagine what huge pressure a Chinese person with AIDS would suffer in getting treatment in hospitals. And in my country, although it's not very rich, patients can feel quite easy with whatever illness they have.

I don't just refer to 'sex' which is not open in China, but all illnesses. We have nothing to hide from doctors because we want to get the best treatment, but I'd like to hide it from other people, after all, it's my own business.

I don't care who operates on me as long as they could cure me. But the hospital should be sure of their medical students' ability; after all, your life is not a laughing matter.

# What's Mine Is Yours – or Is It?

Young professionals say they disagree with the idea of pre-nuptial agreements, but...

By Chen Ying

They are young. They wear business suits. They work at high-tech companies in Zhongguancun. But their ideas about marriage seem to be traditional.

Five single guys from China Netcom Corporation published their personal information in *Beijing Youth Daily* December 20. The newspaper plans to issue a series of articles to help the young elite of Zhongguancun find partners. A survey conducted in the area by the newspaper and Data Sea found that among the more than 300 respondents, half of them are still unmarried. (See detail on page 7 last week).

The five answered the same three questions to show their attitudes towards marriage. The third one was "what do you think about pre-nuptial agreements?" Their answers were all similar — they dislike or will not adopt the idea.

But another survey conducted by China Mainland Marketing Research Company of 424 men and women in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou recently reveals that nearly 57 percent agreed to the idea of a pre-nuptial contract before marriage. Sixty percent of women agree completely, five percent more than men.

Pre-nuptial agreements are no longer considered unusual in Western countries.

When the older well-established Hollywood movie star Michael Douglas married the young and beautiful Catherine Zeta Jones, their pre-nuptial agreement was well publicized even in China.

What do people really think about this idea? Some opinions follow:

**Wang Xiukuo, official, Chaoyang Notary Public Office, male, married**

Generally speaking, there are more cases of couples involving pre-nuptial agreements before marriage at the office than in the past. The young and older age groups are the two main parties. The latter, who are re-marrying, make such an agreement to avoid any trouble or quarrels about their property between children from their previous marriage.

It's a trend. Today, even students will go Dutch when they have dinner, let alone their future marriage. It's a question of money. Today, the economy plays a more and more important role in every aspect of



Sun Tietao, Jiang Yun, Mai Xiaodong, Ren Haixuan and Xia Xiao from China Netcom Corporation  
Photo by Cheng Tieliang

people's daily life.

People now own much more property than before. They should think more about how to deal with their wealth. It's not a simple matter for a couple at this point. It's natural that a person will take some measure if he or she owns two million yuan but his or her partner has nothing. As for me, I didn't make such an agreement when I married because I hadn't any money at the time.

**Li Hui, lawyer, Huaheng Law Firm, male, unmarried**

I won't be surprised if more and more couples sign a pre-nuptial agreement before marriage. Today, people understand marriage much better than before. Marriage isn't a rope to fetter two persons. People would rather choose to divorce than to stay married in name only. Then how to distribute their property becomes very important.

Furthermore, someone may want to marry just because he or she only cares about their partner's money. But marriage isn't a business. Pre-nuptial agreements can protect both sides in a fair way.

Although the new Marriage Law, implemented since April 30 last year, has no de-

tail about pre-nuptials, the law states that they can be put into practice, which people never did before.

It reflects general social ideas about marriage. It's reasonable that some people think it's breaking with their traditional ideas of married life. But on the other hand, it shows that people's consciousness to protect their own benefits has been more enhanced. I think I'll choose to make such an agreement before marriage.

**Wang Peng, account, female, married**

I got married without one. Making such an agreement is to make two hypothesis about the future into reality — the couple will some day get divorced, and then will quarrel about their joint assets.

If I have nothing and my partner is rich, who will suggest making an agreement? If he does, I will be upset. If I do, would he think I'm not confident about our relationship? I think this idea creates an artificial gap between two people. I doubt whether a couple's life can be happy if they make everything so clear-cut. The real cause of property entanglement lies in the individual character. I think it's more useful to make a

moral pre-nuptial agreement than one dealing with property and assets.

**Yan Zi, freelancer, unmarried**

It's common nowadays to say that people who marry with a pre-nuptial agreement have an 'AA marriage' (This is a popular phrase in Chinese similar to going Dutch). Though I don't intend to make a pre-nuptial agreement before marriage, I don't object to others doing so. If the couple would like to make such an agreement and they will be sharing the living expenses after marriage, at least the agreement can avoid an imbroglio during divorce.

Some may think that a marriage with a pre-nuptial agreement lacks romance and warmth. The first impressions of such an idea seems callous. But I don't think couples who have one will care about every bill when they have dinner together. Maybe our 'AA marriage' is a western idea, but with Chinese characteristics.

**Edward Vickers, Briton from Hong Kong, unmarried**

It is well known that Hong Kong law is basically the same as British Law. Pre-nuptial agreements are optional here. Probably, I would make such agreement before I got married. Especially these days, you don't know what might happen in the future.

Let's say you meet a girl and fall in love. You get married. Of course, you hope when you get married you're not going to separate or divorce. But several years later, you divorce. If you don't have a pre-nuptial agreement, your partner will automatically be entitled to half your property. This happens in Western countries, so it's safer this way. It's more common for wealthy people to have a pre-nuptial agreement than ordinary people.

Now, the divorce rate is very high in Beijing, similar to many Western countries. I wonder how many people in China nowadays get married to their first boy or girlfriend? Maybe it was more like that 10 or 15 years ago. You may have had romantic feelings with your first or second love, but you don't any more. A lot of people are realistic. They hope their marriage will last, but you can't be one hundred percent sure. Being realistic is not necessarily unromantic. But romance doesn't last for ever, so maybe you need these agreements.

### SOUND BITES

*"It's true that the movie industry can't develop normally without criticism. But I want to say there may be too many unsound comments now. When can we cultivate the atmosphere of appreciating others? Even though some work is not to your taste, you can learn valuable lessons from it. It's not equal to flattery."*

— **Feng Xiaoning, Chinese director, talking about the media questioning Hero, the latest movie from another Chinese director Zhang Yimou**

*"It seems like the government will be realistic and support the US as much as it can. Because if not, no one would ask Turkey about its opinions on what should happen after Saddam, or take into consideration its interests."*

— **Oktay Eksi, chief commentator of Hurriyet, a Turkish newspaper, that the US has asked Ankara to allow the deployment of as many as 80,000 US soldiers in areas close to Iraqi border for five years**

*"It is in your hands and your hearts to stop all forms of violence and terror."*

— **Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah, the senior Roman Catholic, during a Christmas Mass in Bethlehem, the highest-ranking Catholic Church in the Holy Land, calling for an end to Mideast violence and Israeli steps to ease tensions**

By Chen Ying



# Spare a Little Pocket Change

By Su Wei

A survey conducted by Guangzhou Vantage Market Research Company on the consumption habits of students and their pocket money gives us the facts.

The average monthly allowance of the 873 students surveyed, aged between 7 and 18 years old, living in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu, is 121 yuan. Of these, 9 percent are endowed with monthly spending power of over 300 yuan.

## Silver spoons

Over 80 percent of surveyed students contend that it is their parents who give them their spending money, even before they ask for it themselves. Of this allowance, 67 percent is regular pocket money, while 8 percent comes from Chinese New Year gifts and as a reward for high marks in school.

"When they ask me how much monthly allowance I want, I tell them that I'll ask them for money if I need it. But they insist that I carry some cash with me in case of emergency," says Wang Jue, a junior middle school student in Haidian District. "Since they want to give it to me, why should I bother refusing their generous offer?"

"When I was a little girl, I rarely had any pocket money," recalls Meng Xuehua, Wang's mother. "Occasionally I might have saved 5 or 10 cents from the little red envelopes at Chinese New Year. I know how embarrassing it is when you want to buy something but have no money to pay for it. I don't want my son to be left out for lack of money, while all his friends are buying something. Nor do I want him to be laughed at for being poor."

Like Meng, most parents interviewed by Beijing Today agree that their children deserve an allowance, for "each family only has one child." They said they would continue to give their children pocket money as long as they could afford to, and that they would increase the sum "proportionally with their age."

## Monetary praise

Song Wei, a father, says he only gives pocket money as a reward for his daughter's good performance at school and good behavior at home.

"The school itself uses the same incentive, awarding the top-ranking student 800 yuan. Our country rewards those who contribute the most to the nation with dozens of thousands of yuan. Why can't we reward our own children with 100 or

200 yuan if they behave well," he says. "We just pay the money ourselves."

Zhong Yinping, director of *Sisters*, a national magazine for primary and middle school students, believes that pocket money should not be related to school marks. "It is their duty to study hard and obtain high marks. Simply offering them money as a motive and a reward takes away their moral sense of duty, and in a way, robs them of their integrity."

In a nationwide survey conducted by *Sisters* in June this year, "hoping to be rewarded with pocket money" was almost never listed by the surveyed students as a motive for performing well in school.

"I don't mind receiving money from my parents when I get a high score. But I'd rather they just tell me directly, 'You've done so well. We're proud of you! Keep up the good work!' I don't want them to simply give me money," says Chen Yuxin, 13.

## Money buys happiness

According to those surveyed, around 35 percent of their monthly allowance is spent on food, followed by 20 percent on entertainment such as toys, computer games and CDs, and 19 percent is deposited into a savings account. Less than 10 percent is used to buy books and other school supplies.

"I don't like to eat regular meals. I prefer snacks or hamburgers," says Zhang Yue, 12, although he admits he is sometimes more attracted by the toys offered inside the snack boxes or western fast food "happy meals." "Most of these toys are part of a series, so I can't buy just one. I must have the complete set, so I just keep on buying the food."

Li Luxin, vice general secretary of China Youth Association, says the large amount of pocket money spent on snacks and fast food is also responsible for the increasing number of fat children in China, now exceeding 20 mil-

Every afternoon of the school year, five days a week, as soon as the bell rings, primary and middle school students in Zaojunmiao, Haidian District, make a dash for the shops 50 meters away shouting, "Coca-cola! Sandwich! Toy robot! Glass necklace!..."

The shopkeepers are so busy that they sometimes deliver the wrong items to their impatient customers. Within twenty minutes on a snowy day, sweat is already beading up on their foreheads, but they never complain, contented by the steady flow of business, and bearing no qualms about taking money from the eager little hands.

Middle-aged Xiao Xiao has been running a corner store selling snacks, books, toys and ornaments for over ten years. "I must say, I've witnessed a distinct improvement in living standards," she comments. "Everyday each student spends around 3 or 4 yuan at my store, compared with only a few able to spend even 1 yuan before." She says that even if she closes the shop over the winter holiday, she can still live comfortably on the money earned during the past three months.

Is a new social phenomenon hiding behind her success?



lion. "Over 10 percent of children in Beijing have been diagnosed with obesity," she remarks.

Li also points out that the toys which attract students the most are often electronic, audio-visual, high-tech gadgets, which "may be very advanced technologically, but don't actually challenge children's intellectual abilities. At most, they develop hand-eye coordination."

Zhong Yinping estimates that these juvenile trends in pocket money spending indicate that the student consumption market has yet to mature. "These young people have only recently caught the eyes of businessmen. There is still relatively little variety for consumption catered to their needs or interests in the domestic market, especially in the form of cultural consumption," which he believes is too narrowly defined. "The students really only have two choices: academic textbooks or pure entertainment."

## Where to shop

Four of the schools interviewed by *Beijing Today* expressed their concern over students with so much to spend on so little value, but none of them was prepared to do anything about it.

Wei Songqing, a retired principal of a key middle school in Haidian District, complains that most students' purchases are irrelevant to their studies. "But what can we do besides tell them not to waste their money?"

Then she reconsiders her use of the word "waste": "Children do the same thing as adults. Everyone likes snacks. When we adults, or more precisely, we teachers buy snacks, are we not also 'wasting' money? The only difference is that we are wasting the money we earn ourselves, while students are wasting the money earned by their parents."

Li Rui, another middle school principal in Chongwen District, says that since people have become more aware of protecting

their private rights, the school has less control over their students' spending habits. "Pocket money is also a kind of private property. What if students or parents sue us for interfering with their private property?"

## Money talks

While nearly 62 percent of surveyed students believe it is to their benefit to spend money as they please, a little less than half admit that irresponsible spending may eventually turn into a bad habit.

In a juvenile prison in Daxing, Beijing, stealing and robbing for money is listed as the number one crime among its more than 380 delinquent inmates.

"My mother was unable to give me the same amount of pocket money as my father after they divorced," says Wu Jian (pseudonym), 17, to be released next year. "I couldn't tolerate the sudden decrease in allowance. But I knew she couldn't give it to me, so I had to find some other way to make up for it."

Wang Hanyu, 16, student of a key middle school in Fengtai District, remembers how happy he was one year ago when his parents first gave him a monthly allowance of 100 yuan.

"I thought to myself, 'I can spend the money on anything I want — CDs, clothes, books...'" Only later did he realize that 100 yuan barely lasted him two weeks. Wang has since conceded that he is neither a wise nor a thrifty shopper.

## Money rules

Fang Xiaoyi, director of the Psychological Research and Development Center of Beijing Normal University, says Wang may later be excluded from mainstream consumption altogether. He suggests parents teach their children to appreciate the value of money by giving it in moderation and encouraging them to manage their own budget.

"The value of money is not 'how much I can buy,' but rather, 'It's mine to squander or save,'" he says. "Money is a fact of life and an integral part of society. The sooner children learn how to manage it efficiently, the better."

He observes that many young students are spoiled by too much, too easy, too soon. If they reach the peak of their purchasing power at Wang's age, they will only feel impaired by future financial obstacles in life.

"Spare some change and spoil the child. The point is to teach them to be independent," asserts Fang.

Photo / Tony Stone

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# Who Failed the Revolution?

## Best-seller co-authors of *The Learning Revolution* fight over copyright disputes in Chinese court

By Ivy Zhang

Gordon Dryden, co-author of best-selling book *The Learning Revolution* expressed shock this month after the Beijing People's High Court rejected his claim for over 20 million yuan in unpaid royalties.

The court rejected the accusation by Dryden, from New Zealand, and Dr. Jeannette Vos from the United States that a Chinese mainland publisher signed a secret agreement with its distributor to print 10 million copies of their book under its buyout contract with a Hong Kong based publisher.

*The Learning Revolution* presents a life-long learning program for the human mind. It swept the Chinese mainland in the late 1990's.

"It has sold between 10 and 11 million copies in the past five years," Dryden told *Beijing Today*. "10 million of these were sold under a year in a special edition in China, making it the fastest-selling, best-selling non-fiction book of all time."

"However, the co-authors have received only 3 percent royalties on 400,000 copies, leaving royalties on 9.6 million copies unpaid," says Dryden.

Dryden says they are unable to sell further editions of the book until the case is settled. "Yet the updated version is much more applicable to China."

Dryden says he is currently considering an appeal over the decision to China's Supreme Court. The court declined comment.

### A chain with five parties

The lawsuit brought by Dryden is complicated. But the relationship among the five parties involved in the case can be summed up with a simple link.

Standing on the top of the link are the co-authors; then Jalmar Press, an American publishing company acting as the co-authors' international agent; Sun Ya Publications, a Hong Kong based publishing company comes next; Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore follows and Beijing Clever Software Company stands at the bottom of the link.

Based on the court's 18-page verdict, the co-authors granted exclusive publishing rights to Jalmar in 1993, which in turn had the right to sell or license the sales rights to others subject to the consent of co-authors. In return, Jalmar agreed to pay the co-authors royalties based on a percentage of its sales revenue.

In 1996, Jalmar signed a seven-year agreement with Sun Ya authorizing the publication of Chinese versions of the book (1994 edition) for Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland with royalties set at 8 percent of the total retail price. In addition, Sun Ya could transfer the same rights to other companies with written consent obtained from Jalmar.

Later the same year, Sun Ya signed a copyright transaction contract with Sanlian in which Sun Ya authorized Sanlian to publish and distribute the simplified Chinese version of the book in the mainland with a royalty of 6 percent of the list price.

In June 1998, Sanlian and Clever signed a five-year agreement under which Sanlian was responsible for copyright matters and Clever was the exclusive distributor of the book's special edition, which combines the 1994 version and 17 pages of revisions faxed to Sun Ya by the co-authors.

About two months later, Sanlian signed a one-year copyright buyout contract with Sun Ya to protect the authors from piracy. Under this contract, Sanlian pays Sun Ya more than 670,000 yuan on the basis of 400,000 copies of the book.

In December 1998, the special edition of the book in simplified Chinese was published by San Lian and distributed by Clever.

However things did not run as smoothly as planned, and something went wrong.

The co-authors sued Sanlian and Clever for copyright infringement and the court heard the case in November

2000.

About two years later, the court ruled that the co-authors' claims were rejected.

So the questions are: What went wrong? Who is guilty?

### Is Sun Ya guilty?

Dryden insists that the original, and only legal right to sell the book in China is covered in the 1996 contract between Jalmar and Sun Ya.

"Any further buyout contract needed the formal, legal approval of both the authors who, if they had approved it, would have authorized our agent, Jalmar, to sign such a contract," says Dryden.

Sun Ya disagrees. The company told the court that the co-authors only have the right to be paid when it comes to the publishing of the book in China. And since the authors authorized Jalmar to publish the book, the company is the only one that needs to pay royalties to the co-authors.

In addition, Sun Ya claims they had the right to sign the copyright transaction agreement as well as the buyout agreement. "In fact, such agreements were confirmed by Jalmar," Sun Ya was quoted in the verdict.

But in the courtroom, Jalmar denied the confirmation. Jalmar stated that Sun Ya did have the right to sign a publishing agreement with Sanlian (1994 edition) but the fax between Jalmar and Sun Ya on the buyout issue was not designed to authorize Sun Ya to sign a new contract but rather to express their willingness to resume negotiations.

The court declined to rule on whether Sun Ya had overridden its power to sign a buyout agreement with Sanlian and on whether the royalty payment clauses are legal, saying that any disputes between Sun Ya and Jalmar should be settled in the US as indicated in the contract.

### Is Sanlian guilty?

Had Jalmar authorized Sun Ya to agree to the 400,000-copy buyout, "such a contract would have been null and void, and illegal, because Sanlian had not disclosed the existence of the 18-clause secret agreement and its agreements to authorize the printing of, firstly 5 million copies, and then an additional 5 million copies," says Dryden.

The 18-clause secret agreement is the exclusive distribution agreement signed between Sanlian and Clever, which, in Dryden's view, is the key issue of the case.

"A completely illegal secret agreement has apparently signed away the co-authors rights to royalties on all book sales in China, including any future editions of *The Learning Revolution*," Dryden states.

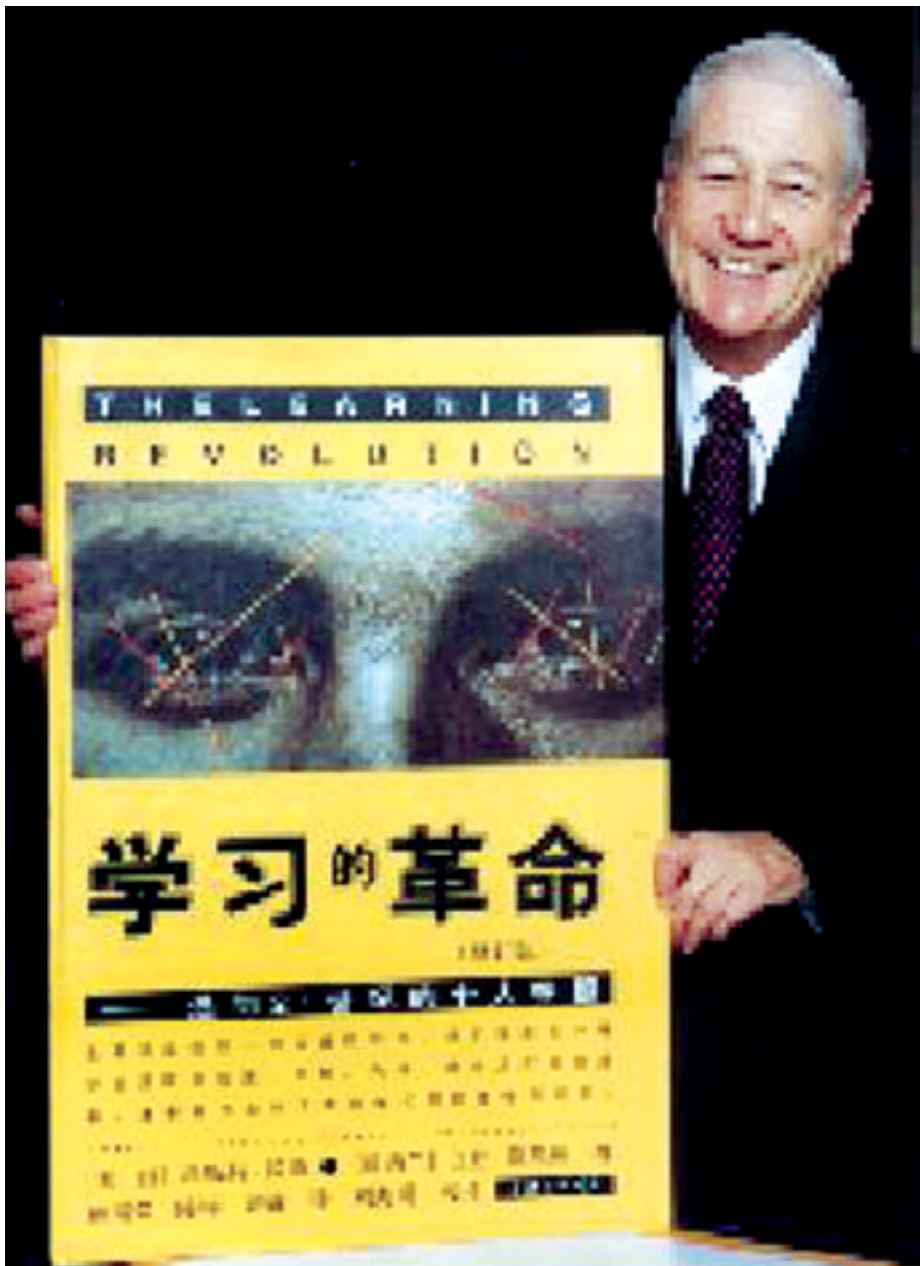
Had they known the details of the deal between Sanlian and Clever, "there is no way we would have signed any document allowing anyone to sell 10 million copies of our book with us being paid only 6 percent for 400,000 copies — and nothing for the rest. And we would certainly NOT have agreed to Sun Ya receiving half our royalties, whether on 400,000 or on 10 million copies."

But the court did not back up Dryden's stand.

The court stated that Sanlian obtained the right to publish the book based on its agreement with Sun Ya, and that Dryden provided Sun Ya with 17-pages of revisions. After San Lian published the special edition, Dryden went to Clever to attend press conferences and promotion activities and expressed his appreciation towards Clever's efforts to promote the book.

"All the facts convinced the court that Dryden and Dr. Vos have authorized Sun Ya to grant permission to Sun Lian to use the 17-page revisions when publishing the book," the court stated. Thus, Sanlian's publishing of the special edition and Clever's distribution are legal, according to the court.

Dryden says the judgment was completely unexpected. "Astoundingly, the



Gordon Dryden stands next to a copy of his book's cover, celebrating the first five million copies sold in China. The author admits to helping promote sales of his book but says he discovered the existence of a 'secret agreement' in March 1999. Photo provided by Gordon Dryden

court has ruled that my own efforts to help promote the book in China proved that I was a party to the fraud," says Dryden. "I would have thought it obvious to anyone that any author would be delighted to help a company committed to selling 10 million copies of his book."

Is the court wrong? *Beijing Today* approached Professor Zhou Lin and Professor Tang Guangliang at the Intellectual Property Center of China Academy of Social Sciences. Their answer: "no."

"In this case, the author had contacts with Sanlian and raised no controversy over its marketing activities," Zhou says. "Neither Sanlian or Sun Ya has to get authorization from the authors. It depends on the contract signed between them. It seems like there is no clause stating that the contract must be confirmed by the authors."

But if Sun Ya was not authorized to sign the buyout contract, the author could sue Sanlian and Clever because "they signed a contract with a 'thief.' Unauthorized production is piracy," Zhou says. "The key is to check whether Sun Ya was authorized authentically and completely."

Tang voiced a different opinion. "In the case Sun Ya did not obtain authorization, it would be OK as long as the situation then shows that Sanlian has reasons to believe that Sun Ya has that right," Tang says. According to China's Contract Law, "the contract only binds the two signing parties. The fax enabled Sanlian to have grounds to believe that Sun Ya had the right to sign the buyout agreement."

Tang suggests that Dryden had already received the royalties, which indicates that he knew where the money came from and that he recognized the contract between Sun Ya and Sanlian. If Dryden had known nothing about the deal and had never taken any money, he might have won the case.

### Is Clever guilty?

Clever seems to be good at setting records. The company sold about 10 million copies, making *The Learning Revolution* the world's biggest-selling nonfiction book of the past decade, and one of the biggest ever," according to Dryden.

And, the company is involved in one of the biggest copyright disputes.

"We are surprised to receive the indictment. Our relationship with Sanlian is to promote sales. We don't have the publishing rights but we are entitled to distribute," says Chen Xin, a manager from Administration Division of Clever. "Even if something goes wrong, Sanlian shall take the liability. We don't take any responsibility."

Chen says except for Chairman Mao's

books, "no other books like *The Learning Revolution* have been promoted at such a high cost." The manager estimates the cost at tens of millions of yuan.

As the court supports Sanlian and Clever's claim that the publishing of *The Learning Revolution* (special edition) in simplified Chinese was approved by the co-authors, Dryden is worried.

"Under the High Court ruling, we're still uncertain as to whether the 18-clause contract between Clever and Sanlian is, in fact, regarded as legal. In which case, Clever has the right to distribute all future copies of the book without paying the authors a cent. Now that really is state-legitimized piracy," says Dryden.

But, Clever seems innocent. "The distributor has no obligation to verify the position of publisher," says Zhang Ping, legal professor at Beijing University, "but if the book is piracy or the publisher infringes on the copyright, the distributor shall take related liabilities."

In this case, "Clever's sales are intended as good, which is different from piracy. Clever promotes the book and regards the book as legal, plus the co-authors went to help promote the book. I think Clever is no problem," says Zhang.

### What to do next?

The first round of the case is closed. But there are more twists and turns to think about for the future.

Dai Jun, president of Sanlian, says they will not sell the book anymore and that a good lesson has been drawn from their first international copyright case.

"We will be cautious when obtaining overseas copyrights in the future," says Dai. "We'll try to obtain the complete authorization, particularly in the aspects of getting authorization letters from the original publishing house and the authors. We were not quite clear about the procedures."

For the co-authors' next step, Professor Zhang suggests they go to Sun Ya "because Sanlian and Clever already paid Sun Ya royalties based on their agreements. If the authors think they have suffered a great loss, they should go to Sun Ya," says Zhang. "If Sun Ya really exceeded its power, it shall take all responsibility because the contracts between Sun Ya and Sanlian as well as between Sanlian and Clever have no problem."

Contracts prevail in disputes in China as well as in the world, as long as they deal with legal goods, Zhang added.

To be on the safe side, when signing a contract transferring his exclusive rights, the author should indicate in the contract that all contracts signed in the future should be exposed to and confirmed by the author, says Zhou.

Follow Up

## China to Auction Off Property of Detained Actress

By Sun Ming

Nineteen houses and apartments belonging to a leading Chinese actress who was found guilty of tax evasion will be auctioned off early next month, according to the Beijing Auction House.

All the money gained from the auction will be used to pay the actresses' debts to the government.

*Beijing Today* covered a story on the actress' tax evasion in its August 2 issue.

Liu Xiaoqing, 51, an actress best known for playing a Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) empress in *The Reign Behind the Curtain* in the 1980s, was arrested in Beijing on July 24 and charged with tax evasion.

By means of under-reporting revenue, overstating expenses and making other false declarations for purposes of fraud in tax-payment, Liu and her companies, the Beijing Xiaoqing Culture & Arts Company Ltd. and Xiaoqing Shiye Development Co., were found guilty of evading 14.6 million yuan (US\$1.8 million) in taxes since 1996.

Up to now, 1.97 million yuan has been paid back and 2.14 million yuan in funds from Liu's company account have been frozen.

"The total cost of the property is about 5.55 million yuan," Xie Jingwei, deputy manager of the Beijing Auction House, told *Chengdu Business*, a newspaper from Liu's hometown in Sichuan Province.

Fifteen of Liu's 19 homes were in Beijing, two were in southwest China's Chongqing municipality and two in southern Guangdong Province. Prices of the properties are set to start at 30 percent lower than market level.

The auction, authorized by the Beijing Tax Bureau, will be held on January 5.

## Honey, They Swapped the Kids

By Ivy Zhang / Lisa Lee

Six people, of two separate families, were awarded 500,000 yuan for "mental anguish" after their babies were switched at birth 21 years ago at Tonghua People's Hospital, Jilin Province.

The case, which involves at least one other family as well, was heard by the Dongchang District Court in Tonghua city.

*Beijing Today* covered this case on December 13.

Last year, Zhao Shengqiang and his wife Gong Ke of Tonghua city discovered their son Zhao Da was not theirs by birth during blood tests. A total of eight baby boys were born at Tonghua People's Hospital on the same day as Zhao Da.

According to DNA testing, Sun Chao, the son of another couple — Sun Huadong and wife Li Aiye — is the real child of Zhao's family.

However, Zhao Da's true parents are still unknown, meaning at least one more family was involved in the accident.

This June, the two families sued Tonghua People's Hospital for infringement of their rights.

After the verdict was announced on December 18, Sun Huadong and Li Aiye claimed that their intention of suing the hospital was to find their true son instead of seeking money. But the court failed to mention this point in the verdict.

"The court as well as the defendant did not consider nor accept our demands for an apology, which is hard for us to understand," the couple says.

The two couples claim they will appeal until they "get a satisfactory result."



# Heart and Sole Devotion

Qiao Quanying could not even make *jiaozi* at the family party during the Spring Festival holiday because of his "shameful" job. But his commitment to pedicuring earned him the love of his wife. Now one of a dying breed, Qiao tends injured soles and hearts.

By Zhao Pu

Most people recognize their friends by their faces, but for Beijinger Qiao Quanying, feet play a stronger role in remembering his acquaintances. "I may not recognize your face, but as soon as you show me your feet, they will ring the bell for me," he smiles.

Strange? It seems natural with an understanding of his career. Qiao is a pedicurist, one of the few surviving pedicurists in Beijing.

Qiao has been working as a pedicurist since 1972. He says he has suffered a lot, as this career was traditionally looked down on in China. Qiao says he used to be sneered at and teased by others, and even his own family was ashamed to mention his job. But he carried on with a sincere love for his career and a commitment to his clients.

But Qiao is not a simple pedicurist. Despite the grievances and hardships he has gone through, Qiao has achieved success as a foot doctor, eradicating pain for thousands of patients. In addition, his career has won him a wife and many friends, and has just recently earned him a college professorship.

## A dying breed

Li Jian, a taxi driver from Tianjin, lives in the Huguosi Hostel near Qiao's foot clinic. He has warts on both feet, a problem dating back 15 years to the days he was a middle school student. "I had two laser treatments in the last 10 years, after which the warts grew back and became bigger," he says. "I also tried freezing the warts, after which a new wart grew next to the former one."

But with the help of Qiao Quanying, he is quickly recovering. "In another two weeks I can return to work," he says.

Qiao uses specially made steel pedicure knives as well as traditional Chinese medicine and ointment to treat various foot problems. He is an expert in foot massage and can also do acupuncture. Many patients, who could not find relief in big hospitals, have been cured in Qiao's care.

Qiao says his occupation dates back to the last Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). That was when public bathing venues first appeared in China. At first, the service just included trimming of the



Qiao uses specially made steel pedicure knives as well as traditional Chinese medicine and ointment to treat various foot problems. Picture by Ma Haifang



The couple maintains a good partnership not only in life, but also in business.

nails and cutting off the calluses. Gradually it became more sophisticated.

Yet pedicurists are a dying breed, due mainly to the lack of respect it earns in society. "When I started working as a foot doctor in the 1970s, there were 200 people in the industry in Beijing," he says, "but now there are 30 at most."

Pedicurists mostly worked in bathhouses in the past. Thirty years ago, there were three famous pedicurists in Beijing, and the bathhouses they once worked in were prosperous. Now two of those have died, and the other has been retired for many years. Very few of their apprentices remain.

In recent years, public bathhouses have closed down one by one. Many pedicurists changed their profession. The Xinjiekou Bathhouse, where Qiao had worked for some 30 years, closed down last year. Qiao had also thought of shifting to a "more decent" occupation, but he came back and took up his pedicure knife again, saying he can't let go of his own enthusiasm for this profession and of his loyal patients.

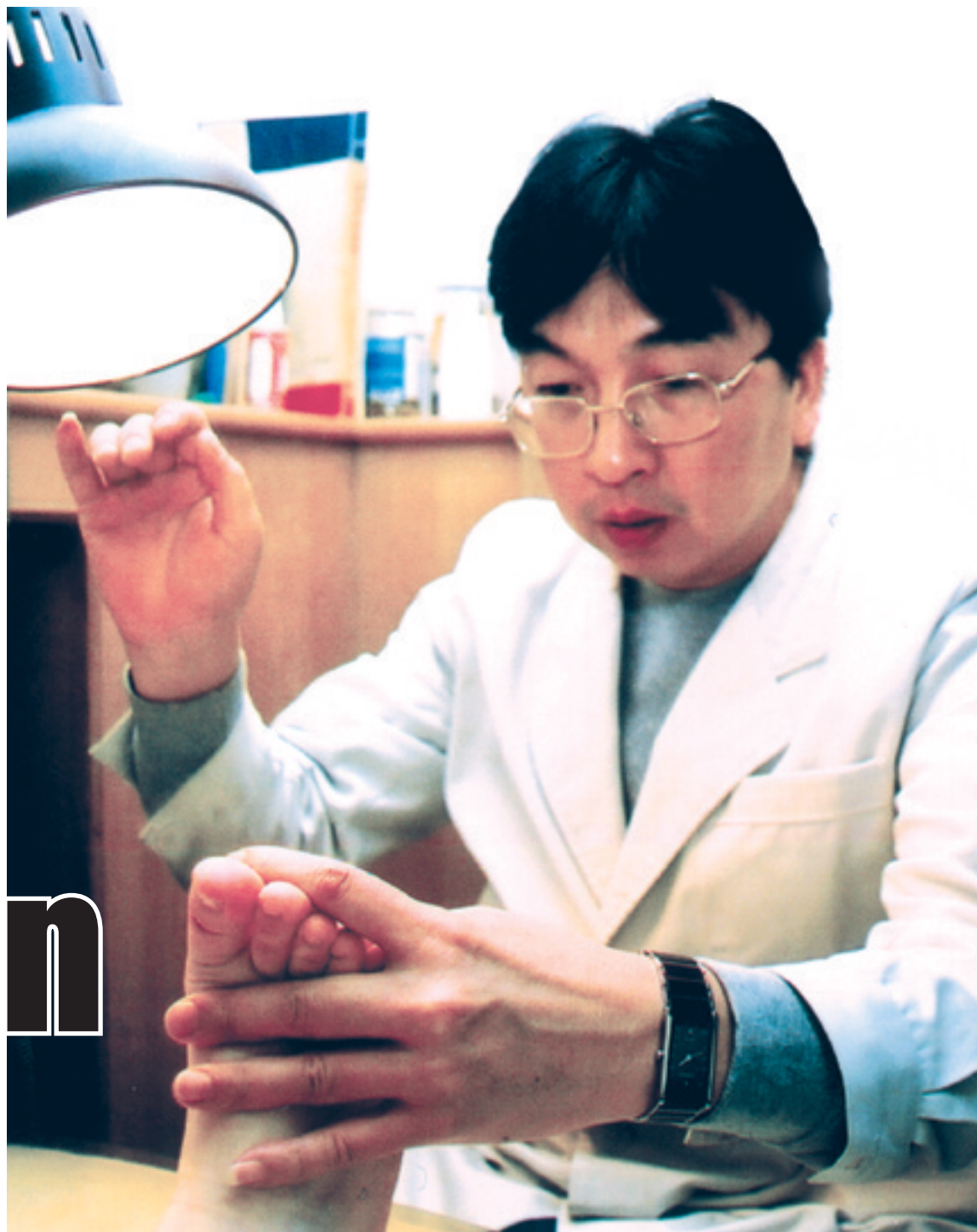
## Reluctant apprentice

Qiao was born in 1955, the fifth child in his family. As a child his health was poor. So his father, a veterinary surgeon, let him learn martial arts and taught him traditional Chinese medicine. "The medicine knowledge I acquired as a child paved a foundation for my future practice of pedicuring," he says.

In 1972, when Qiao graduated from high school at age 17, he was assigned to work as a pedicurist at the Xinjiekou Bathhouse. In that era, it came close to being the very worst job for a young man. "It's impossible for me to get a good job, as my family status was rather bad," says Qiao. His father was regarded as a rightwing scholar. "There was no choice for me."

Five other young men were assigned together with Qiao to the bathhouse. Yan Chunlin, an old pedicurist, took the six new apprentices under his wing. "Up to now, the other five guys who entered the bathhouse with me have already changed their careers," says Qiao. "I'm the only one who survived."

Qiao disliked his job at first. "I felt hopeless at the beginning,



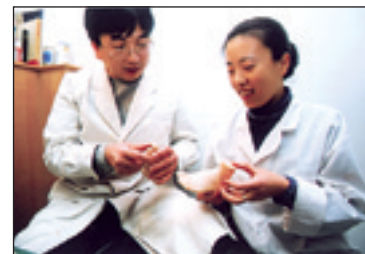
Qiao Quanying has been working as a pedicurist since 1972, eradicating pain for thousands of patients.



Qiao prepares teaching materials after work, he will begin teaching at the Beijing Science and Technology Research Institute next year.



"What's your problem?" Qiao asks a waiting client.



Schooling an apprentice at work.

Photos by Zhuang Jian

It seemed that I would waste my youth in that bathhouse, holding various feet with manifold diseases."

His first client was an old man who had just come out for a pedicure after a slapdash bath. "He put his foot on my knee, it was filthy. I could never forget the feeling, it was disgusting," Qiao recalls. It took him one hour to take care of the old man's feet. When the client left, Qiao hid in a quiet corner in the bathhouse. He didn't have lunch. "My teacher found me later and he encouraged me that I did pretty well."

Qiao's feeling for his career changed as time went by. "A year later I found myself beginning to enjoy the career," says Qiao. "I felt proud and contented when my client said thanks to me, after I removed their foot pain, and when more and more people came to the bathhouse to visit me with their feet problems, when I found so many people were relying on me... I started to love my job," he says.

Qiao spent half of his salary on buying medical books and devoted his spare time to the study of traditional Chinese medicine and massage. He applied the knowledge to his pedicure practice.

## Sole survivor

From the day he reported to work, Qiao has been looked down upon by people around him, even by his own parents and brothers.

"My father never mentioned me in front of others. He talked about my four elder brothers, skipped me, and talked about my younger brother," says Qiao. Another hurt was Spring Festival family banquets. "They never let me make *jiaozi*, they thought my hands were dirty."

Because of his indecent job, Qiao had trouble finding a girlfriend. "No one would like to marry a pedicurist; even if the girl didn't mind, her family wouldn't permit it." Qiao was taught harsh lessons. Once a neighbor girl

liked him and bravely proposed to be his girlfriend. But soon her family discovered the "shameful" relationship. The girl's brother beat Qiao up, warning him to stay away from his sister. "I remember his insulting words, which hurt me deeper than his fists," Qiao says.

"But I am never a person who lives for other's words!" When other pedicurists gradually shifted to other occupations, under pressure from society and family, Qiao stayed. "I received respect from my patients. Others thought I was a loser, but actually I'm a winner in my own world."

When he was in his 20s, Qiao had already proved himself as outstanding in Beijing's pedicure circle. He cured many state officials and cultural celebrities. Pujie, the brother of the last emperor Puyi, was one of Qiao's clients. "He lived close to my workplace and often visited me for his foot problems," says Qiao. They became friends. "He often praised my pedicure skill and persuaded me to stay with this career."

Qiao's wife, Qi Shuowei was also one of his clients. She had paronychia, ingrown toenails that were causing her acute pain and inflammation. "I had the problem with the big toes of both my feet for many years," Qi revealed. "I've been to some big hospitals in Beijing before, none of which solved my problem for long." She heard that Qiao was one of the best pedicurists in Beijing and visited him in 1986. "What struck me were not only his excellent skill, but his humor and graciousness," she says.

Qi was 12 years younger than Qiao. She married him in 1994, despite protest from her family and bias from her friends and colleagues.

## Private foot clinic

At the beginning of last year, the Xinjiekou Bathhouse, where Qiao worked for 30 years, closed down. Qiao suddenly became a

laid-off worker. He went back home and pondered his next move.

"I missed my work place soon after the bathhouse was closed," says Qiao. He visited another public bathhouse to reminisce the past. "I entered the pedicure room and stood there watching," Qiao recalls. "My hands were itchy seeing the pedicure knife." Qiao took over the knife from a young pedicurist's hand and took care of his client for free. "He called me teacher when I finished, and I left contented, with an affirmed belief that I could no longer leave this career."

Last summer, Qiao opened a private foot clinic. Things were hard at the beginning, but now everything is on track, he says. Qiao is the surgeon at the clinic and his wife (and partner) takes care of finances and public relations. Their seven-year-old daughter, Qiao Lin, acts as the coordinator when there are disputes.

July 24, 2002, was a red-letter day in Qiao's calendar. On that day, the Beijing Science and Technology Research Institute awarded him a professorship. The night before the big day, Qiao says he could not sleep.

Qiao will begin teaching at the institute next year. Qiao's father has proudly declared this news to his friends, his fifth son is a source of pride for him now.

Speaking of future plans, Qiao reveals his wish to open foot clinics in western countries. "I wish to introduce traditional Chinese pedicure to foreigners. As a science, medicine should have no boundaries," he says.

Last Friday, Qiao was having dinner with his wife at a restaurant beside his clinic. When they were about to leave, the waiter told them that their meal had already been paid, by a young couple that had left earlier. "It must be one of my patients," Qiao guessed. "Probably," answered his wife.





Brightly colored fragments

By Miao Yajie / He Zuo

The spectacular find was a purely incidental act of two villagers. On 23 November around 9 am, Zhang Qiyuan and Zhao Qingfang, from Zhaizi Village, Shengjing County, Zhangqiu city, Shandong Province, were digging holes to plant trees at Weishan Mountain Scenic spot. Suddenly, Zhao Qingfang's pick struck something hard, making a loud crack. At first they assumed it was rock, but upon closer inspection, it appeared to be a vividly carved stone horse head. With aroused curiosity, they continued to dig, until they finally uncovered an entire row of horse heads. Then they ran down the mountain to report their find to the village authority. According to an official from Zhaizi Village, several Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) tombs had been found before, and on the mountain peak was the mausoleum of Liu Piguang from the Western Han Dynasty. Would this tomb have any relation with Liu's?

#### Status of the dead unknown

Professor Wang Keqi from Shandong Normal University is doubtful. "Although Liu was the prince of Jinan, he was executed for participating in a subversive riot, so his burial would not have been as spectacular," he says.

Cui Dayong, executive head of the Weishan terracotta warriors excavation team, says, "The tomb probably buried a prince, yet just who on earth it was is still uncertain."

#### A comprehensive burial site

Excavation has gradually shed light on the structure of the honor guards. Basically the pit is divided into four areas. In front of the guards of honor are five cavalymen, followed by three chariots, each drawn by four horses, and



Two warrior heads unearthed

Grand prize in archaeology this December goes to Zhangqiu, Shandong Province, where the third largest terracotta warrior pit in China has just been discovered, following the first in Xi'an's Qinshihuang Mausoleum, and the second in Yangjiawa, Xianyang of Shannxi Province. The pit, 9.7 meters long, 1.9 meters wide, and 0.7 meters deep, buried over 100 painted warriors dating back to the Eastern Han Dynasty (24-220 AD). Cavalymen in front, infantrymen in back, and chariots in the middle, all standing in unison, form an impressive army indeed. This discovery in particular provides precious research information on the military uniforms of the Eastern Han period. After one suspenseful week of being closed for excavation, the pit has recently opened to the public.



The first unearthed horse and figure



Scattered remains of 2000-year-old warriors

Photos provided by Photocom

## Site of Third Largest Terracotta Warrior Pit Opens

one double-shaft chariot. Between the chariots there is a row of warriors either leading or guarding the horses, and on either side of each chariot there are guards on horse-back. Overall, the chariots are surrounded by cavalymen in U-shape formation. Following the phalanx of chariots is a group of over 80 infantrymen. Between the phalanxes of chariots and infantrymen are scattered several figures who differ in appearance from the infantrymen, with a more vivacious complexion.

"They may be musicians," suggests Cui Dayong. "It is a com-

prehensive burial pit with both military men and music troops. During the Eastern Han Dynasty, it was common for the army to go to battle with a band of musicians, on one hand for entertainment, on the other for boosting morale."

The components of the chariots are intact, and their relatively large size among Han chariots unearthed so far make them highly valuable for research. **Terracotta warriors of the Han Dynasty**

Warriors dressed in red attire, holding elaborate shields in their

hands, correspond to the description of soldiers in the Han Dynasty poems. The horses drawing the four chariots are colorfully painted, with the first row white on grey base, the second row red on grey base, the third black, and the fourth grey. On the left side of the first row, on the black heads of the two guarding horses is a *danglu*, a popular Han Dynasty bridle ornament, painted in red and white.

Experts say burial figures of the Han Dynasty were usually molded, a technique borrowed from the production of bronze

ware in the Shang and Zhou dynasties (16c-221BC). First a model figure was made and baked in the kiln, then a thick layer of clay was applied on it. After it was left to dry in the shade, it was separated in half along the ears, and the final mold was baked. The mold was filled repeatedly with clay and baked for mass production. If the posture of the figures was too complicated, the craftsmen would make several molds, and then join the parts together. A set of terracotta warriors in various shapes, such as the ones in

this pit, might have required 9 groups of 73 pieces.

#### Protecting the terracotta treasures

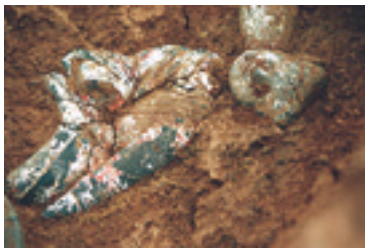
Unfortunately, the damage of the pit led to the serious damage of its terracotta treasures. Much of the color on the figures has peeled off or faded. Experts say the main reason for the damage was the collapsed chamber roof of the tomb.

Protection of the unearthed warriors is already underway. Since the temperature and humidity of the excavation site are far from ideal, a layer of special glue has been applied to each warrior, both to strengthen the fragile bodies of the figures and to preserve their colors.

After about a week of cleaning up, mapping, numbering, photographing, and videoing the pit, restoration of the warriors has been entrusted to Zhangqiu Museum. Fieldwork and restoration may be just as long, since this time most of the unearthed figures are broken, and reparation may cost several times more than originally estimated.

"There are many ancient tombs around the discovered pit, and the main chamber or other burial pits may be lying just nearby," says Cui Dayong. So far archaeologists have detected over 300 possible locations throughout the 2000 square meters surrounding the pit, but it is still difficult to estimate the scale of the whole burial ground.

However even if more burial pits were discovered, excavation would not begin until the weather warms up next spring, in order to protect the relics. In the meantime, the local government has approved the construction of a dedicated museum to protect and display the terracotta warriors and other unearthed items to all amateur archaeologists among the general public.



Peeling paint on warrior

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By Yu Shanshan

Finally, a phenomenon worth talking about. It began this August, and has since gone out of season. Coconut trees in Beijing – or rather, tropical palm-shaped street lamps in the city's Central Business District (CBD).

Among the district's new inhabitants, one trio of such enlightening coconut trees forms a colorful cluster just northwest of the Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua University – much to the dismay of its academic residents. The vast majority of students and faculty members disparaged the artificial shrubbery as an outright insult to the Academy's own artistic taste, and furthermore as an incompatible scene for this traditional, northern capital, according to a recent investigation by sixteen senior students of the department of Arts and History.

The investigation, conducted as a project for professor Zou Wen's "The Art of Editing" course, not only collected as many facts and opinions as possible, but also raised the very serious question of how to properly accommodate the widespread synthetic plants, so as to decorate a modern city while retaining its own aesthetic characteristics.

#### Money grows on man-made trees

The report begins:

"In recent years, more and more cities have chosen imitation plants, especially coconut and other palm trees, to decorate their streets, from Harbin of Heilongjiang province in the extreme north, to Hainan province at the southern border of China."

Beijing joined the club in 1993, but has been riding the wave with new large-scale construction and reconstruction ever since 1999.

According to the report, hundreds of artificial coconut trees are widely scattered around street corners, tourist spots and business districts in Beijing, most assuming double identities - palm tree by day, street lamp by night.

The prevailing tropical design has become big business, not only creating a new demand for many state factories specialized in synthetic vegetation, but also inspiring landscape planners with a cheap raft trick to fill in the blanks of their public place blueprints.

A spokesmen of Beijing Bureau of Parks and Landscape said it's up to each district and to each entity of each district to decide for themselves whether or not they need to install artificial greenery in their neighborhood.

For example, Jianguomenwai Street Afforestation Office finally decided to replace their initially costly urban architectural plan with five fake coconut trees on the corner of Guanghua Road, because of its "affordability" (less than 10,000 yuan each).

Locals seemed to have warmed to the tropical new scenery – ("They're lovely," said one female passer-by. "I used to pose for photos in front of these



Coconut trees in snowy Beijing

Photo by Jackey

## A Question of Kitsch

trees."), while others expressed discontent with either the wintry contradiction or the aesthetic disharmony next to their natural neighbors. ("The coconut trees shouldn't be so much shorter than the poplars next to them. Cut a few poplars, they'll all blend in better.")

#### A question of taste

But critics hate them. The Academy of Arts and Design refused to contribute to the 40,000-yuan fee for the coconut-tree-lamps purchased by Jianguomenwai Street Afforestation Office. "For three stupid 'trees!'" exclaimed Chen Danqing, famous painter and professor at the Academy. "Their very appearance in this location threatens our reputation. People might think this is our idea of creativity."

Most of his colleagues also spoke from high-art standards of natural beauty in response to the question. "Imitation is false," retorted Yuan Yunfu, another professor of the Academy, and a well-known public artist. "It's a disgrace in the name of Art to show off such kitsch in the public places of our capital!"

Other censures published in the report also decry "the trees' disharmony", first with Beijing, China's solemn, northern, non-tropical capital; second with CBD, the symbol of the metropolis's economic frontier.

"More seriously, the assembly-line manufacturing of these trees has resulted in a dangerous assimilation of Chinese cities nationwide," remarks Xiao Hong, reporter of *Chinese Construction Daily*, when asked her opinion on the issue.

Other self-respecting fine artists look down on these cheap decorations as inevitable representations of modern commercial culture. "It's just a matter of time before these pseudo-pop-art eyesores are ousted out of sight," speculates Zheng Shuyang, director of the department of Environmental Art Design of the Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua University, "but for now there's not much we can do, given the pitiful taste of the mainstream."

This high-art contempt has provoked an annoyed reply from some of the city's 'common' citizens. One of them, Bai Yiding, challenges the "so-called artistic taste" of such recognized personalities, contributing his own modest criticaster comments to promote artificial vegetation. "Experts have no right to impose their taste on the rest of us," he says. "All art is synthetic, including these artistic 'trees.' But the emotion they arouse in me is for real."

#### A question of balance

For better or for worse, these urban coconut trees have made a bold statement in the history of taste. "This project must go beyond mere decorative considerations, in order to provide the community with a spiritual and emotional uplift," says Qin Pu, director of the Sculpture Institute of the Central Academy of Fine Arts. "They should also be placed in strategic locations," he adds.

Artistry aside, at least one other pressing issue threatens the urban environment. As Ji Xueli, professor

of the Environment and Engineering Science School of Tongji University, points out, although the high-quality, wind-resistant, cold-resistant design of these tree-lamps guarantees them a more than 15-year lifespan, the non-recyclable, non-biodegradable polyvinyl chloride (PVC) from which they are made will poison Beijing after their demise.

"The synthetic trees are eating our precious green lands!" warns Shi Wanjing, a supporter of this "anti-fake trees" campaign. "They are distancing humans from nature. People must understand that they need to relax in fresh air which only be ample provided by real trees."

"We hope the situation will be under control," Professor Zou told *Beijing Today*. But his students were unable to obtain the distribution map from urban landscape planning departments, due to the disparate administration of the placement of synthetic plants in Beijing.

"Addressing displacement is the biggest challenge, and very few, if any, have come up with a good response from interest groups," observed Zou, who is also General Secretary of the Sculpture Committee of the Chinese Artists Association. "Any cultural development that drives away longstanding artistic or human city decoration may benefit property owners in the short term, but it cannot be considered successful for society as a whole, or even in the long term interest of local business."

## Teaching Old Tradition through New Art

By Qiao Luqiang

Gu Liming's solo exhibition Changing Tradition is now on display at Soka Art Center in Beijing. 30 works are exhibited, including 15 oil on canvas and 15 mixed media on paper.

Shandong artist Gu Liming comes from a traditional artistic background, having graduated from the Fine Arts Department of Qufu Teacher's College of Shandong, and now leads a traditional artistic career as a teacher at the China Fine Arts Institute in Zhejiang Province. Gu Liming's own work rephrases explicit cultural references of Shandong tradition.

The most popular stories of Shandong folk culture, such as *Kylin Sends his Son to School*, *Door God*, *Warrior God*, *Fortune God*, have always been expressed in diverse folk art forms over the years, including Yangjiapu's woodcut print in Weifang, and stone carvings and bronze statues in Qufu. Gu Liming has borrowed the same traditional titles and themes for his own works, but this time, he's given them a whole new twist.

"My roots are in the traditional education and culture I received in Shandong, and my own artistic creation has grown from these roots. I see myself as a contemporary artist emerging from Shandong traditional culture, and my work is born from traditional art; however in my mind Chinese contemporary artistic creation involves not only heritage, but above all change and transformation."

Gu Liming has been trying to create his own style of Chinese contemporary art by combining elements of Chinese

traditional culture, Western artistry, Shandong folk art and stories, and unique materials and media. "In my works I emphasize comprehension rather than purity in terms of artistic schools and styles. It's a kind of hybridization," says the artist in his own words. He has applied this aesthetic concept and technique to a number of traditional titles.

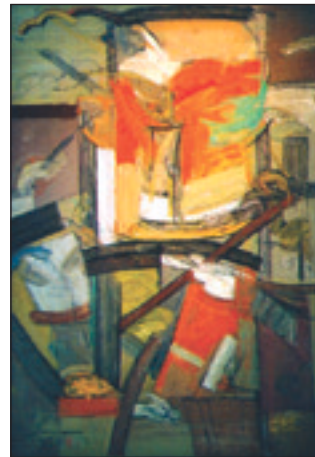
While the local folk woodcut *Kylin Sends his Son to School* is a simply composed monochrome, Gu Liming's work of the same title adopts a different structure leaving no blank space, using western rather than local Shandong-style colors, and the figures themselves are blurred from the abstraction. For his remake of *Door God*, Gu daubed a special glue on the paper and painted on it while the glue was still wet, creating a unique effect, not entirely dissimilar to a traditional print.

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**Where:** Soka Art Center (Beijing), North End of Silk East Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing

**When:** December 13-29, 2002

**Tel:** 6586 0344



Fortune God

Photo by Zhuang Jian

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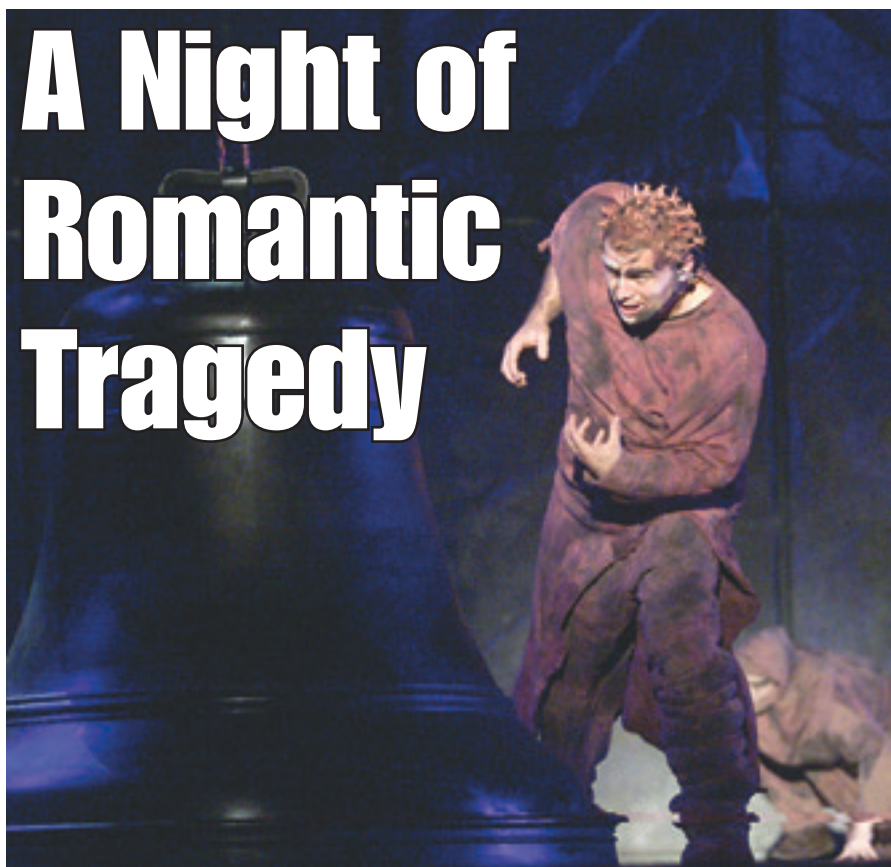


Photo by Chen Bai

## Harry Potter Comes to Beijing!

By Wang Chunzhu

He is the brave young wizard who faces danger unafraid, he sports a pair of glasses, black robe and lightning-shaped scar on his forehead and he ventures into the Chamber of Secrets to save Hogwarts School yet again.

But when he came to Beijing he dressed in a gray suit with a blue shirt and tie, like a proper English gentleman. There were no glasses on his handsome face, and he told *Beijing Today* his favorite subject in school was "English, definitely English."

More than 100 journalists and many of Harry Potter's little fans were invited to take part in the activities held by China Film Group Corporation last Saturday afternoon in honor of the arrival of the wildly popular star Daniel Radcliffe.

A piece of paper in hand, Daniel read out his greetings in Chinese: "Hello, ev-

erybody. How are you? I love Beijing." Rousing applause from the audience interrupted each sentence.

Selected randomly, two lucky kids were invited to take photos with their hero.

The time for Daniel to spend with his fans was limited. So was the news conference, which lasted only for thirty minutes, but the young gentleman managed to answer a flood of questions in a quiet and gentle manner.

Despite of the heavy snow, quite a number of children lingered outside the gate of the China Film Group Corporation, hoping to catch a glimpse of the famous Harry Potter. However, the number allowed inside was highly limited and they must wait nearly a month to see Daniel on the big screen in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, which will be available to the public on January 24, 2003.



Photo by Huang Liang

By Wang Chunzhu

Three acrobats perch precariously atop three gigantic brass bells, rising gradually above the stage, while below the hunchback Quasimodo (played by Jérôme Collet) cries for the return of his beloved Esmeralda (played by Shirel) in a morose solo. This grand scene was from the Beijing premiere of the famed musical *Notre Dame de Paris*, which was held last Friday night at the Great Hall of the People.

Based on Victor Hugo's classical novel of the same name, the two-hour musical focused on three men — Frolo (played by Michel Pascal), Phoebus (played by Richard Charest) and Quasimodo — and their obsessive love of the Gypsy dancer Esmeralda. Each of the two acts was coherently presented by a series of songs, and what impressed the audience most were the duos and trios by the inspired performers.

But the musical had its own modern interpretations of the classic work. When a band of homeless Gypsies gathered at Notre Dame, their hip-hop dance brought the classical tragedy into the 21st century.

At the end of the musical, Esmeralda declared that she would die for her beloved Phoebus. "I offer myself to him without any return," she sang, "I was born for love and I will die for love."

*Notre Dame de Paris* was over, but the performers remained in a line, singing the theme song *The Era of Cathedrals* in encore for the ebullient Beijing audience. Screenwriter Luc Plamondon and composer Richard Cocciante stepped onto the stage to share the joy and excitement to a standing ovation.

## Chinese Singing Echoes in Sydney Opera House

By Wang Chunzhu

Last Friday night, Sydney time, Chinese singer Song Zuying's solo concert *Happy Times* was held at Sydney Opera House in Australia.

Dressed in lily eveningwear, Song Zuying opened the concert with *Jasmine*, a widely known folk song in China, which immediately caught the attention of the more than 2,000 people in attendance. During the performance, Song Zuying not only presented a variety of traditional Chinese folk songs but also sang several excerpts from the Chinese opera *Red Coral*, showing her ability in operatic singing. The lengthy applause after Song finished the last piece *Austra-*



Photo by Lun Bing

lia, *My Hometown* proved the concert to be a success.

"Holding this solo concert in Sydney Opera House really means a lot to me," Song says, "it's a breakthrough in my singing career."

The Sydney Opera House Philharmonic Orchestra and Voice of Australia Chorus were invited to accompany the Chinese artist. Their joint performance was highly praised by Sydney citizens as well as local overseas Chinese.

## Golden Eagle Festival Wraps Up

By Jenny Wang

No wonder Sun Haiying had to hide a handkerchief in his pocket — he says he was so excited he was afraid he would burst into tears. Last Sunday night at the Third China Television Golden Eagle Festival, Sun and his new bride Lü Liping were awarded as the Most Popular Actor and Actress respectively.

The TV series that brought them such a great honors was *Days with Emotions*, in which Sun acted as a military officer and Lü as his wife. After the shooting was over, their love on screen continued into real life with their marriage.

Other major winners this year include: Best Full-length TV Series: *Long March* / Best TV Series Screen-



A scene from Days with Emotions

writer: Wang Chaozhu (*Long March*) / Best Director: Jin Tao & Tang Guoqiang (*Long March*) / Best Art Direction: Song Hongrong, He Changming & Lin Zhihan (*Days with Emotions*)

It was the third year for Changsha, capital of Hunan Province, to host the Golden Eagle Festival. This year is also the 20th anniversary of the awards, which are decided solely by audience voting.

## WORLDWIDE



Mick Jagger (center), Ronnie Wood (left) and Keith Richards are shown performing in Las Vegas, November 30.

### Stones to Play First Free Concert Since Altamont

The Rolling Stones announced plans on Monday to play their first free concert since the Altamont debacle in California 33 years ago when the Hells Angels turned a "thank you" show into a bloodbath.

The new concert, scheduled for February 6 at the 20,000-capacity Staples Center in Los Angeles, promises to be a more sedate affair. It will raise awareness of global warming, the band's publicity firm Rogers & Cowan said in a statement. (Reuters)

### Russert Rustles \$3 Million for Family Memoir

Miramax Books has signed "Meet the Press" anchor Tim Russert to write a father-and-son memoir for \$3 million.

The book, slated for Father's Day 2004, will focus on Russert's childhood in Buffalo, New York, and touch on family, sports and politics.

"Having known Tim from my years in Buffalo and watching his incredible success over the years, it is a privilege and an honor to be able to share some of his great stories about his father with readers everywhere," said Miramax Films co-chairman Harvey Weinstein in a statement. (Variety)



A scene from Lion King

### Lion King to Roar Louder, Larger on Imax

It has been a movie and a Broadway show, sold millions of records, books and toys, and on Christmas Day, Disney's popular animated film *The Lion King* will debut on giant Imax screens around the world.

The Imax version follows Walt Disney Co.'s recent success releasing animated films like *Beauty and the Beast* and *Fantasia/2000* on the large-screen theaters, which are as high as an eight-story building.

For Imax Corp., bringing the 1994 smash hit to their theaters represents part of its

ongoing effort to show mainstream Hollywood movies to boost revenues. (Reuters)

### Sweeney Todd Hits Chicago

With Bryn Terfel snarling to perhaps his finest performance in *Sweeney Todd*, the Lyric Opera of Chicago was the place to be in music this month.

Terfel, the burly bass-baritone from Wales, gave a chilling portrayal of Stephen Sondheim's Demon Barber of Fleet Street. Many fine actors have portrayed Sweeney, including Len Cariou in the original Broadway production in 1979.



Bryn Terfel as Nick Shadow in The Rake's Progress

But Terfel combined his tremendous voice with extraordinary acting to create the raw emotion of the man, a villain as vicious as any in opera. (AP)

### Brittany Snow Shines on American Dreams

Few things can give you a holiday lift like the sight of Brittany Snow's smile.

The 16-year-old star of NBC's family drama *American Dreams* refreshes that tired cliché "lights up the screen." As Meg Pryor, an all-American girl growing up in the early 1960s, she shines.

"I use a special kind of 'shimmer powder' to glow on the screen," says Snow, parrying a reporter's compliment. She giggles. "No, I'm just kidding.

"Maybe it's just because I'm so really happy doing the show," she ventures. "If Meg is really happy about something, I bubble up inside with everything I love. I love my character. I love the scripts. I love going to work every day." (AP)



Brittany Snow as Meg Pryor dances in a scene from American Dreams

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## Outlet Makes China Debut

By Huang Lisha

Beijing's brand name fans take note: now a new shopping mecca has arrived. Yansha Outlets, the separate store of Yansha Youyi City, is an American-style discount store, specializing in off-season brand-named products. It sells over 200 brands from both China and abroad.

The first floor is crammed with world-famous brands, including NAUTICA, POLO RALPH LAUREN, DUNHILL, NORTHFACE, LAVIN, ADIDAS, NIKE, KENZO. The northwest corner is a more exclusive sales area where ARMANI, GUCCI, GIVENCHY, PRADA are sold at 60-90 percent discount.

Most Chinese brands are found on the second floor and the prices of the garments are more reasonable than those of the first. Bedding, shoes, suitcases, and children's clothes are also displayed on this level.

Yansha Outlets have put a lot of thought into keeping customers happy. One of the highlights of the store is in addition to every boutique's own changing-room, some public ones are scattered in the shopping area, where people can try on the clothes made by different manufacturers. Additionally, if unsatisfied with any of your chosen goods, you don't take them back to the original place; just put them into one of the cloth-made bins placed around the shopping center. You pay for goods altogether at the entrance of each floor.

During breaks from shopping, customers can refresh themselves with a drink or snack in the second floor Water Bar.

The only drawback is getting there. Located at the northwest corner of Gonda Bridge on the Fourth Ring Road, far from downtown, the public transport is inconvenient. Only a few buses pass by the outlet and it is also difficult to take a taxi there. But there are over 600 parking spaces at the front and back, so if you have a car, driving is the wiser choice.

**Where:** No.9, Dongsihuan Nanlu, Chaoyang District **Open:** 1 pm - 9 pm **Tel:** 6739 5802

## New World's New Year Sale

By Salinda

At the end of the year, sales promotions and discounting are a common sight in Beijing's shops, markets and malls, all fearing to lag behind the competition. Beijing's top-of-the-range stores are no exception. However, to maintain the brand images, these stores usually only offer small discounts.

But one of the top department stores in Beijing, One World Department Store, recently gave it's highest discounts of 30% during the sixth anniversary celebrations held a couple of days ago. Some goods will continue to be sold at a maximum of 20% discount through New Year.

In the course of its anniversary celebration, the store displayed seven new brands, including Reporter, Hallives, T.B2, Life Basics, Koka-wa, Issi and Noveli.

Reporter and Noveli are men's fashion houses. From Italy, Reporter's designs are simple and elegant - a look to show off in, priced from 4,000 to 6,000 yuan per suit.

Hallives from New York's Seventh Avenue knows women well. It presents confident and noble designs in black and dark coffee colors. You may have seen their designs on Halle Berry (best actress Oscar, 2002) and Daryn Kagen (anchor for CNN). Priced from 1,500 to 3,000 yuan.

French Kokawa features smooth lines and elegant colors in blends of black, camel, beige, apricot and red to show off women's charms.

More than 1,000 kinds of fashionable styles are available at reasonable prices in the store during the promotional period. Other times of the year, it will be impossible to find these brands discounted to such an extent in the big departments stores.

**Where:** No.99, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6527 1265

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# Ring the Changes in the New Year

The bells are ringing to welcome the New Year, and maybe it's time to re-new your wardrobe. Holiday sales are on now, so for a stylish and fashionable New Year that won't hurt your pocket, why not pay a visit to one of these shopping malls where high fashion doesn't mean high prices to match.

## Best Discounts Brands

By Salinda

Xiushui (Silk Alley) Street and Yaxiu Market (formerly Kylin Plaza, Sanlitun) are usually the first stop foreigners make when they want to buy clothes. You can get good prices, but only after a hard bargaining session! Perhaps you thought that there are no bargains to be had in the many stores along Wangfujing Street, but you'd be wrong. Best Discount Specialty Department store gives discounts of up to 50 %.

The first discount specialty store for brand names in the capital, Best Discount opened two years ago on the fifth floor of Beijing Arts and Crafts Central Store. The 1,700-square-meter store contains over two hundred clothing brands, such as Miss K, Benetton, Sisley, TB2, EGOLL, ELLE, Testing and RO2.

"To satisfy the customers' curiosity, we always change the brands and goods to keep the atmosphere fresh, and we also hold different theme activities every two weeks." Chen Zhen, a supervisor says. "At the same

time, we insist that it is important to cooperate with the suppliers. Reducing marketing costs is one of the secrets of discounting well-known brands; the other is selling goods from storage which may be slightly older styles. Generally, we give 50 - 70 percent discount.

To welcome the New Year, today (this Friday) they are holding a promotion - new dress for the New Year. Famous brands will be sold at 50 - 90 percent discount including clothes and shoes.

Every day the store is always crowded, Chen said, and has no room for expansion. They plan to open the first chain store with parking space in Yayuncun on January 1st, 2003. The 10,000-square-meter retail space will still provide your favorite brands, but in a more comfortable atmosphere.

**Where:** on the fifth floor of Beijing Arts and Crafts Central Store, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District **New store:** No.158, Yayuncun Beiyuanlu, Chaoyang District **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6528 8866, 8527 8261

## The X - Factor

By Huang Lisha

A new face on Xidan's commercial street is the newly opened department store, LCX. The name, LCX means "Lifestyle Concept X," and the Hong Kong invested three-story shopping mall promises that customers will enjoy a most different if not downright cool shopping experience there. Under the guidance of the newest architectural concepts, LCX is designed as an open-style shopping center. Here, all the specialty stores surround the central atrium, open for all to see.

The ground floor is casual clothes' heaven, where over ten world-famous brands are gathered, including CALVIN KLEIN, GAP, OLD NAVY, BANANA REPUBLIC, GUESS, HUSH PUPPIES, etc. Among which GUESS and ESPRIT are flagship stores.

The arrangement of the second floor is similar to that of the first, but the garments are less expensive, pitched in the mid-range with prices to suit most pockets. Here you can find some Northern European brands such as VERO MODA, ONLY, and JACK JONES.

For those planning to decorate a home for the New Year, don't miss the furnishings and bedding on the third floor. Also available are shoes, luggage, bags and watches.

In order to celebrate LCX's opening, almost all the stores are offering discounts, ranging from 20% to 50%. Some are also offering special gifts to customers.

And if all that shopping has worn you out, then sitting in Starbuck's comfortable chairs (1st floor), enjoying a cup of hot, fragrant coffee is not a bad way to restore your energy.

LCX's slogan for this season is "Xperience sheer Xcitement Now", so what are you waiting for?

**Where:** No.88, Xichang'anjie, Xicheng District **Tel:** 8391 3311 **Open:** 9 am - 9: 30 pm

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## New Year Celebrations

By Wesley Lei / Wenlong

### Coffee Garden, New Year's Eve Dinner Buffet

Shangri-La Hotel Beijing

**Cost:** Adult-RMB328+15%, kids under 12 years old-RMB164+15% **When:** 5:30pm-9:30pm Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6841 2211 ext. 2888 **Lobby Lounge, New Year's Eve Countdown**

**Party Cost:** RMB 168+15% (inclusive a glass of champagne) and RMB 98+15% (inclusive a glass of red wine and beer) **When:** Live Band from 9pm **Tel:** 6841 2211 ext. 2888

### Coffee Shop, Wang Fu Hall

Grand Hotel Beijing

Deluxe Chinese and western buffet dinner **Cost:** Adult: RMB688/pax, Children (under 1.2m): RMB488/pax **When:** 6:30pm - 8:30pm, **Gala Time:** 8:40pm - 0am **Tel:** 6513 0054

### Da Giorgio

Grand Hyatt Beijing

Celebrate with your loved ones at midnight. Deluxe six-course dinner will add the magic to the night. **Cost:** RMB 398 (plus 15% service charge) **Tel:** 8518 1234 ext.3628

### Café California

Harbour Plaza Beijing

**New Year's Eve Dinner Buffet Cost:** RMB188 net person, inclusive of FREE flow of local soft drinks and beer

**When:** 6pm onwards

**New Year's Day Brunch Cost:** RMB128 net per person, inclusive of FREE flow of local soft drinks and beer **When:** 11am - 2:30pm Jan. 1st **Tel:** 6436 2288 ext. 2600/2617

### Grand Ballroom & Atrium

The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing

**Shanghai 1920:** Let down your hair, loosen your ties to the sound of 1920's Shanghai jazz, and enjoy Chinese and western food...**Cost:** A: RMB900 net, B: RMB800 net, Child (under 1.2m): RMB480 net **When:** 7pm onwards Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6590 5566 ext.2132

**Countdown Party, Atrium** The Atrium will be the place to be on New Year's Eve. The "Go for Gold" Lucky Draw will be held from 11pm to 11:45pm. **When:** 11pm -3am **Tel:** 6590 5566 ext.2116

### New Year's Eve, Cafe Renaissance

Jing Guang New World Hotel

Salad bar, Cream of peas soup, Grilled beef sirloin, Thai pork chop, Mandarin fish fillet, Grilled lamb chop, Pineapple and lychee parfait...**Cost:** New Year Special Set Lunch at RMB 78 per person and Set Dinner at RMB 98 per person. **When:** 11:30am - 2pm; 6:30pm - 9:30pm, Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6597 3388 ext. 2513

### Salsa Cabana New Years Eve Dance Party

Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center

"Vive Carnival" - Live music begins with their South American Band "Fuego Latino", exciting music that will help you get into step with 2003. Lucky draw prizes to be won. **Cost:** RMB888 net per person **Tel:** 6465 3388 ext. 5700

### Grand Ballroom

Kerry Centre Hotel, Beijing

Don't miss the hottest DJ Sebastian playing your favorite dance music while the most trendy elite join them for this celebration. A spectacular buffet will be included. **Cost:** RMB588 **When:** 6:30pm onwards, Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6561 8833 ext. 6220/6333

### New Year's Eve Party, The Patio Coffee Shop and the lobby

Holiday Inn Lido Beijing

**Cost:** RMB 688 per person. Children 4-12 years old are entitled to 50% discount **When:** 6:30pm to midnight, Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6437 6688 ext. 2883

### Ballroom/Rainbow/Sunshine

Beijing International Hotel

Digital Camera and a lot of lucky draw prizes to be won! **Cost:** RMB788 per adult, RMB588 per child under 1.3 m **When:** 6:30pm-midnight **Tel:** 6512 6688 ext. Lobby

### New Year's Eve Buffet Hilton Beijing

Salmon carpaccio with seared scallop, blue swimmer crab salad with avocado, grilled beef medallion and smoked foie gras with asparagus tempura and ginger marinated Alaskan black cod fish fillet. **When:** 6pm onwards Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6466 2288 ext. 7420 **The Ultimate Party Night** As the countdown for the New Year begins, guests will be poured a glass of Champagne. Endless entertainment, music and lucky draw prizes will be at hand to enhance the ever so exciting atmosphere. **Cost:** RMB 788 per person **When:** 6pm onwards, Dec. 31st **Tel:** 6466 2288 ext. 7370

Photos provided by Harbour Plaza Beijing



You may not know where Shuangyushu Lu is, but it's worth the trip out to Haidian in northwest Beijing, to sample the delights of this newly developing entertainment district.

Wild mushroom banquet

## Haidian Hits the Spot

By Wenlong

Located between the Shuang'an and Dangdai Shopping Malls, the area includes the recently opened UME International Cineplex, a five-star cinema. Dozens of restaurants, big and small, crowd together. They cover a wide range of food - snacks ranging from western style fast food and Chinese favored beef noodles, to Sichuan style cuisine and the renowned casserole dishes served up at Shaguoju restaurant, covered in last week's *Beijing Today*.

Fast food outlets account for more than 70 percent of the total food outlets here. The owner of a beef noodle restaurant explained "People in the area are young and busy so they prefer the fast food and the appealing tidy environment".

We selected three of the more unique Chinese restaurants to make a change from the ubiquitous noodles and hamburgers.



### Liuharenjia Restaurant

This restaurant features Sichuan, Hunan and Canton cuisine. The name Liuharenjia combines the meaning of "sky, earth, east, south, west, north and human beings" blends the seven elements into a jia (family). The will of the owner is good, but perhaps the restaurant is not all that it seems.

A quick view of its giant menu shows that the price for common dishes is reasonable. A big plate of fried shredded potato (tudousi) enough for two is ten yuan. But the recommended bean curd dishes may not be quite worth the money you pay. Bean curd is a common item that people eat for breakfast and usually sells for no more than two yuan per bowl. However, in this restaurant, three pieces of hand-size crucian carp boiled with a layer of bean curd in red oil (*douhua jiyu*) is sold for 26 yuan. The diner can neither eat much meat nor sip the oil. But for the same price you can order grass carp boiled in water (*shui-zhuyu*), enough for at least three.

"Every week we will promote several dishes at 50 percent discount," said Ms. Zhu Qianqian, reception manager of the restaurant. But *Beijing Today* watched the list of the week's specials being written up only to find that all of them were bean curd dishes priced about 30 yuan. Even plain boiled bean curd (*liuhe sudouhua*) was labeled 18 yuan. "The Sichuan style bean curd dishes are really favored by our customers

so we sell them at such a low piece," added Zhu. Low price?!

Other "low price" bean curd dishes include bean curd boiled with beef slices and vegetables (*liuhe hundouhua*, 28 yuan), sliced fish boiled with bean curd (*douhua yupian*, 26 yuan), and boiled eel with bean curd (*douhua shanyu*, 32 yuan).

Though the owner has made a good name for his restaurant and claims to be a fan of traditional culture, *Beijing Today* found that the iron chairs and tables are quite reminiscent of the "golden arches". People may be attracted by its name the first time, but perhaps will seldom return for an 18 yuan bowl of bean curd which is really only worth two yuan.

**Add:** No.9 Shuangyushu Xili, Haidian District **Open:** 10am - 2pm; 5pm - 10pm **Tel:** 6255 0356 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person

### Banmuyuan Restaurant

Beside Liuharenjia is the Taiwan originated Chinese style fast food restaurant Banmuyuan. The first opened in 1996, and now the chain has seven stores to cater to the city. Banmuyuan provides noodles, fried rice, bread, bun, chicken and stewed meat in quantities to suit the single diner.

Banmuyuan (a half-mu garden, one *mu* = 797 square yard) is the name of a famous garden built by architect and dramatist Li Yu in Beijing in 17th century. Before being demolished in the war, it was often used by the owner to host banquets. The banquets featured vegetables of the season, meat patties, and delicate porridges. The present day restaurant borrowed the meaning from the old garden and boasts that it "inherits the essence of the Banmuyuan style cuisine".

The seven chain restaurants are all decorated in the same style. A dark purple inscribed board hangs



Rice with stewed beef

above the entrance and square tables and stools of the same color are set in a tidy order. The dining hall is separated by carved wooden windows. We selected this restaurant from among the many other fast food outlets because of its delicious food and fast service. Customers are given a paper sheet with a list of all the items. The only work a customer has to do is to select the ones they want and then hand back to a waitress. A wait of no more than three minutes, and the ordered dishes are served, fresh and hot.

The beef noodle, made with top quality flour, is 12 yuan. Stewed chicken served in a bowl (*yuanzhong ji*)



is priced 15 yuan, the same price for stewed meat served in a clay pot (*tanzi rou*). Steamed beef buns (*niurou xianbing*), one of the specialties, are only five yuan each.

**Add:** No.11 Shuangyushu Xili, Haidian District **Open:** 11am - 11pm **Tel:** 6255 0621 **Average cost:** 16 yuan per person



### Youyicun Restaurant

Opened two months ago, the 300 square meter restaurant provides homemade dishes along with delicious seafood at a relatively low price. The name Youyicun (another food village) shows the ambition of the boss, Mr. Gao, though at dinner time, half the tables were unoccupied. To increase business, Gao replaced the original functional décor to more eye-catching and cozy dark red tables and chairs. He also hung big red paper cuts of the Chinese character *fu* (happiness) on the window. "I hope the customers can feel at home when they step into my shop seeing these paper cuts," said Gao.

The signature dishes of the restaurant are displayed inside the entrance: stewed mutton chop (*shousi yangpai*, 26 yuan), grilled pork bones (*youyicun fengweigu*, 28 yuan), fried beef with mushrooms (*jigu niurou*, 18 yuan), grilled spicy rabbit legs (*jiaoyan tutui*, 28 yuan), stewed taro with lotus seeds and lily bulbs (*lianzibaihe zhengxiangyu*, 20 yuan) and other vegetables of the season. The prices are quite competitive, but the restaurant doesn't list the higher price dishes such as seafood, afraid of scaring potential customers away.

On the other side of the entrance live fish and shellfish are displayed. Most of the fish are common, such as carp, and labeled from 56 yuan per kilo to the highest, 136 yuan per kilo for flatfish.

**Add:** No.36 Shuangyushu Xili, Haidian District **Open:** 10:30am - 10pm **Tel:** 6256 5898 **Average cost:** 20 yuan per person

Photos by Zhuang Jian

## Go Wild for Mushrooms

We have had clay pots, hotpots, casseroles and now we have some 50 kinds of mushrooms boiled... yes, in a pot. The Wild Mushroom Banquet (*yeshanjun moguyan*) restaurant was the first catering group to introduce the method of boiling mushrooms in a clay pot in 1997. Now the group has opened four restaurants in the city.

Scientists have proved that wild mushrooms contain amino acids, vitamins, protein, and are low fat into the bargain. Mushrooms often don't have a strong flavor in themselves, but take on the taste of meat or fish cooked with them. The best way to enjoy the hint of fragrance is to boil them in a light broth. And this is the theory used by the restaurant.

The restaurant prepares three kinds of soup for boiling mushrooms: black-boned chicken soup (*wuji guodi*), hazel grouse soup (*feilong guodi*) and soft-shelled turtle soup (*jiayu guodi*) at 48, 58 and 138 yuan each. The soup is served in a big clay pot and heated at the table with a mini gas stove.

When boiled, waitresses serve plates of sliced mushrooms, each plate containing about 125 grams. Simply add the mushroom to the soup. After three minutes, they are ready to eat. Customers can boil the meat after finishing the mushrooms so as not to change the taste of the soup. The banquet ends when the chicken (or hazel grouse or turtle) is brought out and cut into small pieces by the chef. It is then put back in the pot to be shared by customers.

A plate of mushroom slices ranges from commonly found ones at 10 yuan to morel at 68 yuan. Other fungus such as dictyophora phalloidea (edible fungus found in bamboo groves, 15 yuan), Chinese caterpillar fungus (28 yuan), and hedgehog hydnum (16 yuan) are all worth a try.

The restaurant also provides Korean-style grilled meat, beef and vegetables. Diners often sit around a clay pot, sipping the soup, and eating grilled beef.

**Add:** 300 meters east of Xuezhi Qiao, Beitucheng Xilu, Haidian District **Open:** 11am - 0am **Tel:** 8201 5186 **Average cost:** 45 yuan per person





## Great Wall Climb



The Great Wall

New Year is coming. Beijing looks more beautiful than ever after the snow, embellished with colorful festival air. How will you spend your holiday?

For New Year and the Spring Festival, organizers at Badaling Great

Wall invite people to attend the annual Great Wall climbing contest. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

**Where:** Haohanpo, the highest section of Badaling Great Wall **When:** January 1, 10:30 am **Tel:** 6912 1017

## Sports



Enjoy playing tennis

## Tennis Training

Peter Burwash International (PBI), one of the leading professional tennis management groups, will come to launch a cooperative program with Beijing Kerry Sports to provide training for tennis.

**Where:** Kerry Sports Center **When:** Now until January 31 **Tel:** 6561 8833 ext 6636

## The Great Wall Spur Hike

This walk offers great views of three valleys and the villages in a nearby area. Not many people visit this part of the Great Wall, yet it is in good condition. This walk starts from a valley followed by an open trail going up to the Wall. When you get on the Wall you will follow a trail to the highest point for a lunch stop.

**Where:** Huairou **When:** December 29, 8:30 am pick up at the Lido, 9 am Capital Paradise **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

## Music



Zhou Zhou

## Life and Sunshine

New year's concert of Chinese and foreign classic works. Zhou Zhou, a disabile boy, will perform in the concert.

**Where:** Concert Hall of the China National Library **When:** December 29 and 30, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220

## Traditional music

A symphonic concert to usher in the new year is to be held by the China Central Orchestra of Traditional Music. Founded in 1960 by composer Li Huanzhi, former head of the China Musicians' Association, the orchestra has toured worldwide as a troupe specializing in traditional Chinese works. Under the baton of Xu Zhijun, the orchestra will play *Overture to the Spring Festival*, *Jasmine Flower*, *Shepherds Man's New Songs*, *Overture to Carmen*, *Nice Flower and Round Moon*.

**Where:** Century Theatre, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** December 27 and 28, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-800 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

## Happy Town

A series of "Mirthful Beijing" concerts will be staged with various musical talents illustrating the beauty of piano, violin and vocals. Award-winning young pianist Huang Yameng will play works by Chopin and Liszt, while blind pianist Sun Yan, a musician with the China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe, will feature Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody, Chopin's Heroic Polish Dance and Jingle Bells, rearranged by the blind musician himself.

**Where:** Century Theatre, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** December 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100-680 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

## Potty for Polkas

The Symphony Orchestra of the Chi-

na National Dance and Opera Theater is to hold a New Year's concert under the baton of Jiang Jinyi and Zhang Zhen, playing world-renowned works including *Overture to Carmen*, *Blue River Danube*, *Hungarian Dance* and *Strauss' polkas*.

**Where:** Concert Hall of the China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** December 31, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220

## Sound from Heaven

New Year's concert featuring a children's chorus.

**Where:** Concert Hall of the China National Library **When:** December 29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 30-180 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220



Luo Dayou

## Luo Dayou Concert

Luo Dayou is of Hakka ancestry and started out as a pharmacist. He started dabbling in music in the late 1970s. He is neither a pop star nor a rocker but rather a musician, and he considers himself primarily a songwriter. What captured the hearts of a generation were his lyrics, touching on issues of life, attitudes, social responsibility and the political problems of both China and Taiwan with an underhandedly critical strain of dark humor.

**Where:** The Capital Gymnasium **When:** December 31, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 280, 380, 500, 600, 800, 1,200 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

## The Platters

It is said the best love songs are the old ones. The world-famous band, the Platter's year-end performance is set to steal the hearts of fans in Beijing. The band's many sweet sounding songs have stood the test of time. On New Year's Eve, their "special gifts" will include "Only You," "Unchained Melody," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "My Prayer," "The Great Pretender" and "Harbour Lights."

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** December 31, 10:40 pm **Admission:** 500-1,500 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

## Stage

## Red Light Story

One of the China's most famous operas, it features a gallant story, with great Chinese people sacrificing their lives for success. Performed by the China Opera Theatre.

**Where:** Ethnic Cultural Palace Theatre, Fuxingmennei Dajie, Xicheng **When:** December 27-28, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 50-280 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198



Tie Mei and grandma

## Exhibitions

## Fashionable Peasants — The Eight Brothers

In this sculpture exhibition, Liang Suo uses images to tell a story. In this story, the peasants' images, identities, roles, and even family names are linked to the fashions of their time and place. Their destinies are concealed beneath the surface of their everyday appearance.

**Where:** Red Gate Gallery, the Dongbianmen Watchtower Chongwenmen **When:** January 26, 10 am–5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6525 1005



Sculpture by Liang Suo



Old street: one of exhibitions

## Chinese paintings-Winter Story

Chinese paintings are the most valuable culture heritage of our country, it is the crystallization of the wisdom of and efforts made by Chinese artists over several thousand years. In this exhibition, there are more than 60 masterpieces by 36 artists, featuring the stories and sceneries of winter.

**Where:** New Art Center, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongchen **When:** January 1–25 **Tel:** 6528 9103

## Oil Painting Exhibition

This exhibition shows many oil painting treasures.

**Where:** East Gallery, Deshengmen Watchtower, north Second Ring Lu Xicheng **When:** January 3–February 31, 9 am–5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8201 4962

## Traditional Chinese painting

Guo Zhengxin, a young painter, uses strong color in his paintings, featuring his view of a wonderful world and beautiful life.

**Where:** Melodic Art Gallery, 14 JIANWAI Dajie, opposite Friendship Store **When:** January 1-30, 9 am–5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6515 8123

## New Year's Exhibition

An exhibition of Song, Ming and Qing Dynasty New Year pictures, woodcuts and embroidery from Shanxi, Henan, Shandong and Zhejiang provinces.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** January 1–7, 9:30 am–7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

## Elite Antiques

A quality antique exhibition displaying the elite collection of screens and couplets from the Palace Museum inside the museum's Dongluzhai Hall. The exhibition is an annual tradition of the museum, which presents a particular theme from its collection along with blooming court flowers. This year various screens and couplets are displayed made of different materials with different uses from the Qing Dynasty.

**Where:** The Palace Museum, 4 Jingshan Qianjie **When:** Now until February 1, 9 am–5 pm **Tel:** 6513 2255

## Movies



A scene from Aida

## Aida

This magnificent production of Verdi's much-loved masterpiece, written in response to a request by the Khedive of Egypt for an opera with authentic Egyptian flavor to open the Cairo Opera House in 1871, was a triumphant success when it opened at La Scala in De-

cember 1985, and Luciano Pavarotti's long-awaited performance as Radames — his first in Italy — was greeted with rapturous applause. In Italian with English subtitles.

**Where:** Italian Embassy Cultural Office **When:** January 2, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

## An Autumn Afternoon

Directed by Yasujiro Ozu. Chishu Ryu spoils his married son. However, his daughter must obey his every decision. She loves her father heart and soul, but at last she is married by her father. In Japanese with Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Handian **When:** December 21, 7 pm **Admission:** 5 yuan **Tel:** 6297 1280

## What a Snowy Day

An ordinary guy, just trying to play by the rules, gets a lesson and gives it back. Wang Junsheng is deceived by his neighbors into confronting a powerful real estate developer. After years of faithful service at the factory, he is double-crossed by his boss. His feisty wife has just been laid off, and his pampered son is struggling to get into a good high school. In Chinese with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** December 27–28, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** michael@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

## Performance

## The Blessing from Volga—Russian Volga Song &amp; Dance Ensemble

The Russian Volga Song & Dance Ensemble was established in 1952. Over several decades, the ensemble has successfully presented many of Russia's traditional songs and dances and Russia's national art around the world.

**Where:** Beijing Exhibition Center **When:** December 27-29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-800 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508



The poster for Swan Lake

## Belarus Artists to Present "Swan Lake"

Consisting of many award-winning dancers, the Academic Bolshoi Ballet Theatre of Belarus was one of the three major national ballet groups from the former Soviet Union. In 1996, in Paris, Valentin Yelizariev was named the best choreographer of the year at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Palace and won the prize Benois de la Danse for the ballet "Passions."

**Where:** Great Hall of the People **When:** January 2, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-800 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508

## Turandot

Guangzhou Ballet is to present their version of Turandot, based on the Puccini opera. It will be the Beijing premiere. With Chinese composer Huang Qiuyuan adapting the music to ballet, the show is choreographed by Andre Prokovsky, with the scenery and costume design by Robin Cameron Don.

**Where:** Tianqiao Theatre **When:** December 26 and 27, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508

## Young Film Star Playing the Violin

After acting in Chen Kaige's film *Together* Tang Yun became a star. He will play the violin in a concert featuring the theme music from Schindler's List and a love-themed Uyghur piece named *Why the Flowers Are So Red*. The concert also features pianist Huang Yameng on Chopin's Nightingale, cellist Feng Kanghao on Saints Sains' Swan and others.

**Where:** Century Theatre **When:** December 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100-680 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

## Poeting Recital

To celebrate the New Year, there are poeeting recitals to the accompaniment of music. The programs include famous prose such as Wang Meng's *Lake*, Gorki's *Petrel* and others. Performed by Jiang Jianhua, Da Shichang, Shi Weijian and Shun Daolin.

**Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** December 29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673



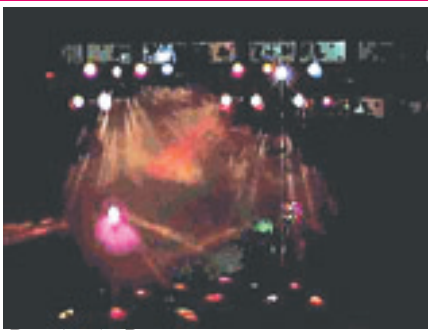
Zhao Lemeng

## Mei Lanfang

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Mei Lanfang's death, Guangzhou Ballet created an experimental ballet depicting the life of China's greatest Peking Opera master. The ballet features Mei and the four female roles he played in colorful performances. Zhao Lemeng, China's best male ballet star, acts as Mei Lanfang.

**Where:** Tianqiao Theatre **When:** December 29 and 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508

## Parties



Dancing in Bar

## Spinning Night

With Club Vogue's Henry Li and hot DJ Sebastian, we bring you the party you want to be at this New Year's Eve. Spin the night away into the New Year 2003.

**Where:** Club Vogue, 15m west of Bella café, Chaoyang **When:** December 31, 6:30 pm **Admission:** 100 yuan **Tel:** 6561 8833

## Live It Up

"Live It Up" is the message and they'll make sure you enter the New Year with a bang! Lucky draws to warm up the early hours as the excitement builds up for the countdown to 2003. From there it's party party party! Guest DJ's join DJs Juice, Bubble and the Confetti man for the party tunes.

**Where:** Vics, inside Workers Stadium north gate, Chaoyang **When:** December 31 **Admission:** 150 yuan **Tel:** 6593 6215

## Celebrate the New Year

Featuring DJs Youdai, Xiao Weng and Ben, playing music for the masses. Party into the early hours of the morning with tons of dancing.

**Where:** Club FM, South gate of Ritan Park Chaoyang **When:** December 31, 10 pm **Admission:** 100 yuan **Tel:** 8562 2308

## Brain Failure

It is last chance to catch Brain Failure before the year-end. They will be pumping out a few new punk-rock songs. Get ready to be wild for their last bash of this year.

**Where:** CD Café, south of Agriculture Exhibition Center, Chaoyang **When:** December 27, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6501 8877 ext 3032

## Music Night

Zhan Fu (Tomahawk) is ready to rock the house on December 28. Zhou Fengling used to be Chinese rocker Dou Wei's guitarist and has written songs for Wang Faye. Now he has formed his own band with a hardcore new metal feed. His band makes a repeat performance on December 29

**Where:** Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** December 28 and 29, 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 20 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109, 6420 4249

## Activities

## Flower Display

A traditional fair highlighting various folk arts, sport performances and displays of local produce. It is similar to the traditional temple fairs held during Spring Festival.

**Where:** Badaling Wangjing Culture square, Wencheng Square and the square near the Great Museum **When:** January 1-15 **Tel:** 6912 1017

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtoday-info@ynet.com or call 6590 2522  
By Guo Yuandan



By Jerry Ho

Yu County (蔚县) of Hebei Province is located about 200 km to the west of Beijing. The county has become famous for its numerous castles. Castles in various forms and styles were built in almost every village or town. Castles of Yu County, along with other historic relics and some traditional folk arts, have made the small county a unique place in North China.

History

The oldest castle in Yu County is Dai Wang Castle (代王城) built in the Zhou Dynasty (1100-300BC). With a perimeter of 12.5 km, the square castle has nine gates. Standing on the remaining walls of the castle, built with solid and strong earth materials, you still can feel the grandeur and vigor of the castle as the capital of a great empire. Inspired by Dai Wang, local people began to build castles for different purposes around the county. The castles built in earlier years before the Yuan Dynasty were comparatively small and simple. But during the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, castle building became quite popular as civilian people could afford to build on their own. Numerous castles of different sizes and styles were built everywhere in the county. Building techniques and the materials used were improved. Meanwhile, many temples were built together with the castles, hence giving the castle



Ornate carvings top a gate in Yu County

# The County of Castles

building a tint of cultural significance.

The Castles

Castles were usually built on raised land in order to resist intruders, heavy rains and floods. Prior to construction Feng Shui masters were invited to choose a site that would bring prosperous blessings for the castle's future inhabitants. When the population within the castle grew larger, the owners would abandon the old and small castles and build new and bigger ones. The larger castles were usually built in open lands far away from rivers. This is one of the most prominent characteristics of the development of castles in Yu County.

Walls of all the castles were made of reinforced earth. But styles of castles built before and after the Yuan Dynasty are quite different. Older ones usually had only one southward gate and the gate tower was also made of earth. Castles built in later years usually had three gates (to the south, west and east) and the gate towers were made of brick. Some newer castles also featured a Warrior's Temple (必建真武庙) and a Jade Emperor (a god worshipped in Daoism) Pavilion (玉皇阁楼) built at the highest part of the northern wall.

Most of the castles remaining in Yu County were built by civilians. Other castles were built by the local government. The latter ones are all located at county borders or at major passes in or out of the county.

The Eight Towns

There are eight major towns in Yu County, including the county seat, that are famous for their castles. The towns have all evolved from single castles and have gradually become commercial centers of local areas.

At the center of Yu County is the county seat, which is itself a big castle. It was first built in the Zhou Dynasty as a small town. In the Ming Dynasty it was rebuilt as a castle and the official center of

Yu County. With a perimeter of about 4 km, the castle has 1,100 battlements and three gates opening to the south, west and east. Towers were built upon the three gates. A Jade Emperor Pavilion stands at the center of the north wall and a Drum and Bell Tower is located at the center of the castle. The walls are made of reinforced earth, strong and solid enough to survive the many seasons over time. Entrenchment with running water was built around the castle and three narrow stone bridges for the three gates are the only passages in or out of the well-guarded castle.

The Castle Village

The Village of Xi Gu Castle (西古堡) is located southwest of Nuan Quan (warm well) Town (暖泉镇). It was built in the Ming Dynasty, and was rebuilt and expanded during the reign of Shunzhi and Kangxi emperors of the Qing Dynasties. The three cultural factors of ancient China's castles — temples, civilian residences and theatres — were featured in Xi Gu Castle, making it a cultural centerpiece for the county.

The Xi Gu castle is not comparatively large, but its layout resembles the Chinese character of Guo (国, state). A path for night patrols surrounds the castle at the inner side of the walls. A central street running from the north gate to the south gate splits the castle into two halves. Three small roads cut the main street from east to west. A well is situated in southeast part of the castle, in the exact position of the dot in the Chinese character of Guo.

When the castle was rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty, two smaller castles were also constructed separately outside the south and north gate of the main castle as guarding fortresses. The two small castles were similar in size but their interior buildings differ greatly from each other. What they have in common is that the inner buildings are mostly temples, but the south castle has more buildings.

Most of the buildings in the south castle are well preserved. The most valuable is the Di Zang (bodhisattva after Sakyamuni that saves people out of miseries) Temple (地藏寺). It is a two-storey building with a small parvis. The brick walls around the parvis are decorated with patterns of flowers. The main rooms of the temple are on the second floor; five rooms to the north are called Di Zang Hall (地藏殿); and 10 rooms to the east and west are for the 10 masters of the Di Zang bodhisattva. All the rooms are preserved well but the inside statues barely remain. Also on the second floor there is the Kwan-Yin (Avalokitesvara) Hall (观音殿), a small bell and drum tower and a warriors' hall.

Main buildings in the north castle include some temples and pavilions but unfortunately they were destroyed a long time ago. Only the walls, east gate and some remnants of old buildings remain.

The buildings in these two small guard castles are quite famous and are surely worth a closer look. The ceilings, brick eaves built to look like wood, Dou Gong architecture (wooden square blocks inserted between the top of a column and a crossbeam) and pillars with carved flowers are quite attractive to visitors.

Civilian Residences of Ming and Qing Styles

In the village of Xi Gu Castle there is a street with well-preserved old residence buildings typical of Ming and Qing Dynasty styles. They are all enclosed yards neatly built along the side of the street. The houses have windows that open inward to the yard but not toward the street. Though built hundreds of years ago, the framework of the houses and all the decorations remain quite intact.

Other Historic Relics of Yu County

The long history of Yu County has left us a lot of historic relics. The numerous



The gate of Xi Gu Bao



A relief sculpture with a dragon pattern



A unique Zhu Tou (column head)



A classic stage

castles, temples, pavilions, towers, steles and gates comprise a wealth of cultural and historic treasure. Here are some other sites.

The Tower at Nan'an Temple (南安寺塔)

A 13-storey brick tower was built in the Wei Dynasty (a period during the Zhou Dynasty). It was originally part of Nan'an Temple. The temple has been destroyed but the tower remains. Lotus leaves are carved on the foundation of the tower, creating the image of the tower rising from a lotus flower. Bells are hung at the corners of each storey and they still ring with the breeze.

Temple of Sakyamuni (释迦寺)

The common name for this temple is the Temple of the Lying Buddha. It is a complex maze of halls and rooms built for various purposes. Architectural investigations show that the temple was built in the Yuan Dynasty.

The Temple of Guan Yu (关帝庙)

Guan Yu was a famous warrior in the Three Kingdoms period (222-280AD). The temple was built in the Yuan Dynasty by the side of the temple of Buddha. The color paintings in the temple are worth a close look. There is a theatre on the opposite side of the temple.

Bei Cang (北仓 The Barns)

This is series of barns built in the Qing Dynasty. There used to be 11 individual barns but now only four of them are left.

Chong Tai Temple (重泰寺)

The temple is located in a village about 10 km away from the county town. It is the oldest and most complete temple complex in Zhangjiakou area. Most of the halls are well preserved and wall paintings can be clearly seen in all the halls.

Hua Yan Temple (华严寺)

Located in a barnyard at Nuan Quan Town, the temple was built in the Ming Dynasty and rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty. A lot of color paintings can be viewed in the halls.

Warrior's Temple

(北方城真武庙)

Built in the Ming Dynasty at the north wall of a big castle in Nuan Quan Town. Twenty-four wall paintings (sized 2.2 x 4m) in the east and west walls of the main hall illustrate the life and experiences of the God of Warriors.

Folk Art

Both as the capital city of an ancient kingdom and an important commercial city in the surrounding area, Yu County still keeps its history of a variety of folk art and entertainment alive.

She Huo (社火, folk art performance, similar to a carnival)

She Huo is a series of folk entertainment performances usually held during the traditional Spring Festival. It originated from the ancient worship for land and fire and gradually evolved into a yearly festival. She was the god of land and Huo the god of fire. The performance includes more than 20 acts including stilt walking, wrestling, lion dancing, fireworks and acrobatics.

Paper-cutting

Paper-cutting is also called "window flowers." It began in the late Qing Dynasty and thrived in the 1930s. The art covers a great variety of figures like humans, pets, houses or landscapes. The local people have set up a "paper-cutting street" in a village called Zhang Zhuang (张庄村) where it first originated. Visitors can see the whole process of how a piece of paper-cutting is made. Paper-cutting was thought of as good entertainment during the seasons when local farmers were not so busy with their crops.

How to get there?

Transportation to Yu County is convenient with state highway No. 109 and 207 passing through the county. Major cities like Zhangjiakou (张家口) and Baoding (保定) in north Hebei Province are not far away. Beijing is 200 km to the east.